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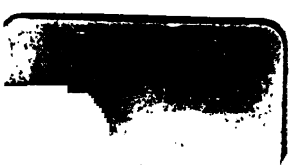

UNITARIAN PRINCIPLES

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UNITARIAN PRINCIPLES

TRINITARIAN TESTIMONIES;

BEING

SELECTIONS FROM THE WORKS OF EMINENT THEOLOGIANS BELONGING TO ORTHODOX CHURCHES.

With Introductory and Occasional Remarks.

BY JOHN WILSON,

AUTHOR OF "SCRIPTURE PROOFS AND SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF UNITARIANISM."

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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PREFACE.

ABOUT thirteen years ago, the author published in England a work entitled "The Concessions of Trinitarians," the object of which was to prove, from the comments and criticisms of distinguished divines belonging to Orthodox churches, the truth of Unitarianism in regard to the teachings of Scripture on the subject of the personality and relations of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Judging, shortly after his arrival in this country in 1846, that, from the kind reception which it had met with, and the small number of copies on hand, the book would soon be out of print, he thought it desirable to republish it on an enlarged scale; and, accordingly, since that time, he has devoted a considerable portion of his leisure hours to the examination of theological works, with the view of making such extracts as seemed best suited to effect his design.

The "Concessions" consisted of a selection of remarks on texts taken up according to the order in which they occur in the authorized version of the Bible, with an Introduction of seventy-six pages of miscellaneous matter. That Introduction forms the basis of the present volume, but has been subjected to so many changes in arrangement, and expanded so much in its character and plan, that it has been deemed advisable to designate this publication by a new title.

It is intended to print, at some future time, the remainder of the work, comprising two or three additional volumes. Each of these, though related to the others, and upholding with them one great presumptive argument for the soundness of the principles of interpretation adopted by Unitarians, will embrace the consideration of a certain number of the Sacred Books, and be issued by itself.

On the mode in which the writer has executed his task, so far as it may be judged of by this volume, it is not for him to pronounce an opinion; but he may be allowed to say, that, while he has sometimes omitted, in his quotations, sentences which seemed to him irrelevant, and, for want of room, has abridged others which he thought appropriate, he has been careful to do no injustice to his authors, and, to avoid even the appearance of unfairness, has not unfrequently lengthened his extracts beyond the measure required by the object he had in view. In noticing, therefore, errors or imperfections, it is hoped that readers will attribute them to any motive but that of a wish, on the part of the transcriber, to pervert the sentiments of others for the purpose of making them coincide with his own; feeling assured, as he does, that no object, however excellent in itself, or however well adapted to advance the well-being of man, should be promoted by any means but those of candor, simplicity, justice, and directness of aim.

If it be thought that the author has failed in the treatment of his subject, let the responsibility rest on himself, and not on the cause which he advocates, or on that section of the Christian church of which he is but an individual member. He has tried, through the assistance afforded him by his brethren of a different faith, to express and disseminate his own conceptions of biblical and Christian truth; but, though writing as a Unitarian, and agreeing essentially with

the opinions entertained in general by the Unitarian body, he does not presume to act as its representative. It is the glory of this denomination that it recognizes no standard but reason and Scripture; no leader but Christ; no human authority as its representative, even though he were a Milton or a Locke, a Priestley or a Price, a Channing or a Norton. With one heart and one voice, its collective members proclaim to the world their conviction of the great truth, that there is but one God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, — two distinct and unequal persons or beings: the first of whom stands in the relation of Parent of all intelligences; the second, in that of Son and Servant of God, by whom he was sent into the world to be the Teacher, the Guide, and the Saviour of mankind.

As to the precise rank in the scale of creation to which Christ belonged, Unitarians differ in opinion, as they do in their modes of speaking of him; and on this point the author may be found to disagree with many of his brethren in this country. It is frankly acknowledged that there are several passages in the New Testament which seem to imply that Jesus existed before his birth as an intelligence inferior only to God; but, without wishing to be dogmatical on a subject which is not altogether free from indistinctness and difficulty, the writer would express his strong conviction, that, whatever Jesus was in a pre-existent state, the Scriptures represent him to have entered into this world, to have lived and labored, suffered and died, as a proper human being, — to have gone about his work of holy love and heavenly instruction, with all the instincts, affections, and properties of humanity; but distinguished above the greatest, the wisest, and the best of men, by his more copious reception of the divine spirit; by his higher acquaintance with the counsels and purposes of Heaven; by his more intimate communion and oneness with

God; by his profounder obedience and submission to the will of the Father; and by his brighter, his more express, manifestation of the love and tenderness of the Deity towards sinful and suffering men.

While preparing materials for his work, the author received proposals from the American Unitarian Association, offering to adopt it as one of their publications. It will, of course, be understood that this is an approval only of the general spirit and aim of the book, not as an indorsement of all its opinions. Grateful for the encouragement thus extended to his labors, he hopes that he may have contributed something, by these pages, to the cause of liberal Christianity, which the publications of that Association are so well calculated to promote.

22, School Street, Boston,
Oct. 15, 1855.

CONTENTS.

Page.

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER I.

THE SPIRIT OF SECTARIANISM INCONSISTENT WITH THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY.

Section.

I. — The Religion of Jesus that of Love 25

II. — True Zeal accompanied by a Spirit of Wisdom, Love, and Humility; False Zeal, by an Ignorant, Uncharitable, Domineering, and Persecuting Spirit 34

III. — Not Uniformity of Opinion, but Piety, Mutual Forbearance and Affection, — Love to God, Christ, and Man, — the Bases of Christian Union 40

IV. — The Duty of holding Intercourse and Communion with Christians of all Denominations, and of Loving all Mankind . . 48

V. — The Nature and Evils of an Intolerant or a Persecuting Spirit 56

VI. — Faith, Orthodoxy, Heresy, Schism, and other Terms, often used as Watchwords of Party Warfare 67

§ 1. Faith and Orthodoxy 67

§ 2. Heresy and Schism 71

VII. — The Constituents of the Christian Church; Wise and Good Men in all Denominations 76

VIII. — Unitarians distinguished for their Worth, Piety, Intelligence, and Learning 86

§ 1. Individual Unitarians 86

§ 2. Unitarians in General 100

IX. — Unitarians entitled to the Christian Name 108

Chapter II.

THE PRECIOUSNESS OF THEOLOGICAL TRUTH, AND THE UNRESTRICTED MEANS OF ACQUIRING IT.

Section. Page

I. — The Importance of Just Conceptions of Religion 125
II. — The Right and Duty of Free Inquiry 131
III. — Dispositions and Means requisite in the Search after Truth . 138
IV. — Hindrances to Free Inquiry, and to the Spread of Truth . . 143
§ 1. Early Prejudices 143
§ 2. Prostration of the Judgment to Authority 145
§ 3. Blind Attachment to Received Opinions 148
§ 4. Predilections for the Mysterious 151
§ 5. Impatience of Doubt, and Aversion to Trouble 153
§ 6. Party Spirit and Personal Interest 155
§ 7. The Speculations of Vanity and the Love of Singularity . . 156
§ 8. The Dread of Contempt and Ridicule 158
§ 9. The Influence of a Proud, Empty, Sectarian Criticism . . . 160
§ 10. The Seductions of Feeling and Imagination 161
§ 11. Hindrances in General 164

Chapter III.

REASON AND REVELATION THE ONLY LEGITIMATE STANDARDS OF RELIGIOUS DOCTRINE.

I. — The Obligation to use the Intellect in Matters of Religion . . 165
II. — Reason and Revelation consistent with each other 172
III. — Holy Writ sufficient, without the Dicta of Churches or of Individuals, to be a Rule of Faith and Communion 177
§ 1. Sufficiency of the Sacred Scriptures 177
§ 2. Inefficacy and Pernicious Results of requiring an Assent or a Subscription to Creeds and Articles of Faith 180
IV. — Need of Revising the Authorized Version of the Bible, and Correcting it from a Pure Text 185
V. — The Sacred Books not Inspired Records, but Records of Revelation 188
§ 1. The Dogma of the Verbal or the Plenary Inspiration of the Bible not supported by Evidence 188

Section. Page

V. (*continued.*)

§ 2. The Denial of Verbal or of Plenary Inspiration not a Denial of Revelation 199

§ 3. The Dogma of the Infallibility of all Parts of the Bible injurious to the Interests of Christianity 206

VI. — The Improper Treatment of Scripture 213

VII. — Principles of Criticism and Interpretation, applicable chiefly to the New Testament 217

§ 1. Criticism 217

§ 2. Interpretation 221

General Remarks 226

CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIANITY INTELLIGIBLE, RATIONAL, AND PRACTICAL.

I. — The Teachings of the Saviour distinguished for their Clearness and Simplicity 227

II. — The Principles of Christianity suitable to all Capacities . . . 234

III. — Christianity not a Religion of Speculative or Theoretical Propositions, but of Vital Facts and Practical Principles . . . 239

IV. — The Creeds and Mysteries of the New Testament Simple and Comprehensible 243

§ 1. Creeds of the New Testament 243

§ 2. Mysteries of the New Testament 247

V. — Belief in Unintelligible Mysteries and Metaphysical Creeds not essential to Salvation 250

CHAPTER V.

TRINITARIANISM EITHER UNINTELLIGIBLE OR SELF-CONTRADICTORY.

I. — Various and Opposite Statements or Definitions of the Doctrine of the Trinity 257

§ 1. The Apostolic or Unitarian Trinity 260

Remarks 230

§ 2. The original Nicene Trinity 263

Remarks and Animadversions 263

§ 3. The Constantinopolitan Trinity 264

Section Page.

I. (*continued.*)

§ 4. The Trinity of Unequal Persons or Gods 265

Remarks and Animadversions 266

§ 5. The Athanasian Trinity, or the Trinity of Co-equal Persons . 268

Remarks and Animadversions 270

§ 6. The Westminster Trinity 273

Remarks and Animadversions 273

Remarks on the Ancient and Modern Theories of Eternal Generation and Procession 274

The Tendency of a Denial of Christ's Eternal Sonship . . . 276

§ 7. The Trinity of Self-existent and Independent Persons . . . 277

Remarks and Animadversions 279

§ 8. The Trinity of Distinct, Eternal, and Infinite Minds or Beings . 280

Remarks and Animadversions 284

§ 9. The Trinity of Distinct Persons, Subsistences, or Agents . . 289

Remarks and Animadversions 292

§ 10. The Trinity of the Ipseity, the Alterity, and the Community . 295

Remarks and Animadversions 296

§ 11. The Trinity of Distinctions, or Mysterious Persons 297

Remarks and Animadversions 300

§ 12. The Trinity of Names, Modes, Relations, or Characters; of Impersonations, Developments, or Manifestations 301

Remarks and Animadversions 308

§ 13. Summary of Trinities 311

Synonymes, Definitions, and Descriptions of the Phrase, "Three Persons" in One Godhead 312

Titles, Attributes, and Functions of the Three Persons in the Godhead 314

§ 14. The Apostolic or Unitarian Trinity (*resumed*) 315

II. — The Doctrine of a Triune God Incomprehensible and Irrational 317

§ 1. This Dogma, no less than Transubstantiation, opposed to Common Sense 317

§ 2. The Dogma of a Triune God utterly Incomprehensible, and repugnant to Reason 318

III. — Theological Terms either Unintelligible and Useless, if not Pernicious; or Expressive of Ideas, and should therefore be clearly Defined 324

Chapter VI.

THE TRINITY IN UNITY, AND THE DEITY OF CHRIST, NOT DOCTRINES OF REVELATION.

Section. Page.

I. — The Terms "Trinity," "Triune God," "Person," "Hypostasis," "Homoousion," &c., Unscriptural and Improper . 331

II. — The Doctrine of a Triune God, or of the Deity of Christ, not revealed in the Old Testament, or known to the Jews . . 334

§ 1. Not revealed in the Old Testament 334

§ 2. A Triune God and the Deity of Christ unknown to the Ancient Jews 339

Explanation of the Phrase, "Word of the Lord," occurring in the Old Testament and in other Jewish Writings 345

III. — The Doctrine of a Triune God, or of the Deity of Christ, not revealed to the Disciples before the day of Pentecost . . 351

IV. — The Doctrine of a Triune God, or of the Deity of Christ, not divulged in the Acts of the Apostles 356

V. — No Doctrines additional to those previously taught by Christ, or communicated on the day of Pentecost by the Holy Spirit, inculcated in the Epistles 362

VI. — A Triune God, and the Deity of Christ, not Doctrines of Express Revelation 366

VII. — The Doctrine of a Triune God, and of the Deity of Christ, cannot be proved from Holy Scripture 374

Chapter VII.

GOD IS ONE. — THE FATHER ONLY, THE TRUE GOD.

I. — The Existence of a Triune God not discernible by the Light of Nature 377

II. — The Unity of God a Fundamental Principle of both Natural and Revealed Religion 381

§ 1. Importance of the Doctrine of the Divine Unity 381

§ 2. The Unity of God proved by Reason, and manifested in the Works of Creation 384

§ 3. The Unity of God revealed in the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament 388

Section. Page

III. — God, the Father, the only Person or Being who is Underived or Self-existent and Supreme 392

IV. — The One Supreme Person or Being, the Father, the Only Object of Primary and Unceasing Adoration 397

§ 1. The Worship of a Trinity Unscriptural and Improper — God to be addressed as One 397

§ 2. The Father entitled to Supreme Worship 399

§ 3. The Son rarely, the Holy Ghost (as a Person different from the Father) never, in the Bible, addressed in Prayer 400

§ 4. The Father, almost to the entire Exclusion of the Son and Holy Ghost, worshipped by the Trinitarian Congregationalists, or Independents, of England 402

CHAPTER VIII.

JESUS CHRIST INFERIOR TO GOD, THE FATHER.

I. — In his Nature and his Attributes, Christ Inferior to God . . 407

§ 1. As a Divine Being, Christ Inferior to the Father 408

§ 2. As a Pre-existent Being, or even as the Creator of the World, Christ not necessarily God 412

II. — Deficiency of Proof for Christ's Existence before his Appearance on Earth 414

§ 1 Christ not the Lord God, or the Angel of Jehovah, who appeared to the Patriarchs and the Prophets 414

§ 2. Christ's being "sent" or "proceeding from God," and his "coming down from Heaven," Phrases signifying that he had received the fullest Instruction and Authority from God 417

III. — Christ's Sonship not implying an essentially Divine Nature, but his being the Messiah, his Moral Resemblance to God, and God's Love towards him 419

IV — Christ not called "God," in the highest Sense of the Term . . 425

V. — Christ trained by Divine Providence to act as the Messiah . 434

VI. — In his Offices and Qualifications, Christ Subordinate to God . 438

§ 1. Christ as a Divine Teacher, and a Worker of Miracles . . . 438

§ 2. Christ as Lord while on Earth 442

§ 3. Christ as Saviour or Redeemer 443

§ 4. Christ as Mediator 444

Section. Page.

VII. — The Moral Character of Christ, that of a Finite and Dependent Being 446

§ 1. As exhibited in his Habitual Piety 446

§ 2. As exhibited amid Temptations 450

§ 3. As exhibited in his Last Sufferings 454

VIII. — Christ not God, but the Representative, the Manifestation, the Moral Image, of God 458

IX. — As Head of the Church, and as Judge of Mankind, Christ derived his Power and Glory from God 464

X. — Christ not to be worshipped with Supreme Veneration, but with the Honor due to one who faithfully performed the Will of God, and died for the Salvation of Men 469

§ 1. Civil, not Divine, Homage paid to Jesus while on Earth . . 469

§ 2. Secondary, not Supreme, Homage paid, or required to be paid, to Christ, after his Exaltation to Heaven 471

Chapter IX.

THE HOLY SPIRIT NOT A THIRD PERSON IN THE GODHEAD, BUT GOD HIMSELF, OR HIS INFLUENCES, GIFTS, &c.

I. — Deficiency of Evidence for the Deity of the Holy Spirit, as a Third Person in the Godhead 477

II. — The Holy Spirit, either God, the Father, or the Divine Power, Influences, or Gifts 481

§ 1. God, without Distinction of Persons 481

§ 2. The Power, Influence, or Gifts of God 482

III. — The Holy Spirit, if a Person different from the Father, Inferior to Him and Christ 485

INDEXES.

I. — Texts quoted or referred to 487

II. — Early Christian Writers referred to 493

III. — Trinitarians quoted or referred to 494

IV. — Unitarians referred to 503

INTRODUCTION.

It is well known, that for many ages the Christian church has been divided into two great classes, distinguished from each other by the names of UNITARIAN and TRINITARIAN.

I. According to the former class, the Almighty and Infinite Being, to whom universal nature, both material and spiritual, owes its existence and preservation, is strictly One, — one in a sense similar to that in which the word is employed when men speak of an individual belonging to any order or species of intelligent natures, — one Mind, one Spirit, one Person, one Agent. This Being, and he alone, is self-existent, underived, independent; the only absolute Possessor of every perfection; the single and original Source of all existence, of all might, of all wisdom, of all goodness; the God and Father of all intelligences, whether celestial or terrestrial, human or divine; the God and Father even of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though immeasurably superior, in moral and spiritual grandeur, to all other beings of whom we have any knowledge, was and is dependent on the One Supreme and Universal Parent for his existence, his powers, and his offices, — for his authority and qualifications as the Messiah; as the Representative or Vicegerent of God; as the Teacher, the Saviour, the King, and the Judge of men.

Some Unitarians are of opinion, that Christ was, in his entire nature, a man, raised up by the Almighty, and endowed with an inspiration far surpassing that of any other Heaven-taught Prophet; others,

that, before his appearance on the earth, he had existed in heaven as a created, superhuman, if not superangelic, being. Some have thought that the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of God, particularly as shown by Jesus and the apostles, had also a personal though derived existence; while others, the majority, have considered the divine spirit, flowing throughout the Sacred Records, to be either God himself, or his gifts, agency, and influence, whether physical, moral, or spiritual, — whether natural or supernatural. They all, however, believe in the strict or simple Unity and the unrivalled perfections of Him who is God and Father, and in the derivation of Christ's nature, power, and glory, and of the existence and attributes of all other persons or beings, from the one Creator, the one Parent, the one God.

Whatever differences of opinion, then, may exist among Unitarians concerning the particular rank in the scale of creation to which our Lord or any other intelligence belongs, there is no difference whatever respecting the great doctrine which contradistinguishes them from their Trinitarian brethren. On this subject there is among them no contrariety of sentiment; and the doctrine, whether true or false, is so simple as to be incapable of being misunderstood.

II. According to the second of the above-mentioned classes, — the Trinitarian, — the Deity is One, and yet Three; one God, but three *hypostases*, or Persons, — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; each of whom is the uncreated, incomprehensible, eternal, and almighty God, though they do not by any means constitute three uncreated, incomprehensible, eternal, and almighty Gods; each being different in some respect from the others, though they are one in essence, and equal in attributes. The second of these persons — God the Son, the Son of God, the Logos, or the Word — assumed human nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, and, after a lapse of thirty years from his birth, entered upon his office as the long-expected Messiah; uniting in his person two natures, one of which was truly human, and the other truly divine. In other words, the second person of the Trinity became God-man.

This, so far as we can judge from the authorized statements of Trinitarianism that we have seen, is the professed belief of all, or nearly all, Trinitarians; and yet, strangely enough, either the language used is so difficult of comprehension, or the ideas involved in the terms are so contradictory, that the supporters of this doctrine, whenever they venture to describe or explain what they mean, and sometimes even in their briefest definitions, affirm or concede some particular point which is fatal to the principle itself on which their belief is founded. Thus, many Trinitarians — adopting the Athanasian Creed so called — declare the uncreated and eternal Son to have been begotten of the Father, and the uncreated and eternal Holy Ghost to have proceeded from the Father and the Son; but it is freely acknowledged by not a few theologians of high eminence, some of whom have been distinguished for their opposition to Unitarianism, that the doctrines of eternal generation and procession clash with the idea of self-existence and independence, — an idea involved in the very conception of a first Supreme Cause. According to the same train of thought, a host of learned Trinitarians have not scrupled to affirm, that a pre-eminence and a subordination obtain among the three persons in the Godhead; — that the Father is the Source, the Fountain, the Head, the Principle of being; and that the Son and the Holy Ghost derived their existence and their attributes from the Father; — language than which none can more clearly imply superiority, inferiority, and inequality; or, in other words, that the Father, and he only, is the true God. On the other hand, some have boldly affirmed, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are as distinct from each other as Peter, James, and John, — that they are three distinct, infinite Beings or Minds; thus virtually giving up the notion of a Triune Deity, and adopting, though with a vague unconsciousness and without profession, that of three Gods: while others, again, have defined the word "person" to signify, not a distinct, intelligent agent, but a mere relation in the Godhead, as if only one divine agent acted in the several characters of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Thus, as it appears to us, and as in the following pages will be demonstrated, is Trinitarianism inconsistent with itself. Thus, in its very attempts to free itself from difficulties, is it obliged to acknowledge principles which war against, and tend to destroy, its own elements.

We are not unaware, that the various parties into which Trinitarians are divided — clearly perceiving and pointing out, as they do, the errors and absurdities of their brethren, but with only a dim recognition of their own — have each felt unwilling to regard the others as orthodox,* and have been often disposed to shut them out from their own fold, or to throw them into the ranks of their professed opponents, the Antitrinitarians. But, however they may differ in their explications of the doctrine from which they are denominated, and — in their several attempts to explain the unexplainable, and reconcile the irreconcilable and absurd — give out, in spite of themselves, glimmerings of Scriptural truth, or yield up positions serviceable to the cause of Unitarianism, — we venture to affirm, that, whether favorable to the views of Athanasius or of Sabellius, of Sherlock or of South, of Bishop Bull or of Archbishop Whately, they are all, with but few exceptions, properly classed under the general designation of Trinitarian, and not Unitarian. They have all acknowledged themselves to be Trinitarian, and many of them have gloried in the name, — have all belonged to Trinitarian churches, — have all subscribed to, or acknowledged a belief in, the dogma of a Triune God, — have all professed Jesus Christ to be, personally, Almighty God, or equal to him, — and have all refrained from being united to churches or to individuals who openly and unequivocally regard God as one, and only one; and who believe the Lord Jesus, whether as human or superhuman, to be

* The term "Orthodox," whether as a noun or an adjective, will be used, in our own remarks, not to imply literal soundness of doctrine, or, as commonly employed in the New-England States, to distinguish Trinitarian from Unitarian Congregationalists, but merely to indicate a belief in the doctrine of a Triune God, of whatever character that doctrine may be, as opposed to the opinions of Unitarians, who are regarded by their opponents as heterodox, or unsound in the faith. In other words, the term, when used by us, is to be regarded as a mere quotation, whether marked as such or not.

a created being, inferior to the God who gave him his existence and his powers.

To state, however, Trinitarianism in its most general form, and with an accuracy sufficient for our present purpose, it is the doctrine which teaches that in the one God there are three co-essential, co-equal, and co-eternal persons, the second of whom became, in the fulness of time, the Messiah. To uphold this doctrine, the stores of erudition, the subtilties of philosophy, the eloquence of the pulpit, and the productions of the press, — not to mention the decrees of synods and of councils, the articles of one church, and the confessions and catechisms of others, — have all been called into requisition. On behalf of this doctrine, in particular, have treatises and comments unnumbered been written and published. For this purpose the Bible has been opened, ransacked, and re-ransacked; and its texts — in fractions, in units, and in thousands — have been brought into logical and metaphysic play. The first words in Genesis have been deemed to intimate a plurality of persons in the Godhead; the last in the book of the Apocalypse, the Deity of Jesus Christ. Indeed, we might say, almost without a rhetorical figure, that nearly every sentence in the Sacred Records has been adduced, either by itself or in combination with others, to prove, confirm, or defend the dogma of a Triune God.*

Had the doctrine adverted to not been impugned, all this vast apparatus of learning, of philosophizing, of decreeing, of catechizing, of writing, of preaching, and of printing, would not, of course, have been brought into operation. Accordingly, it has been found, that, in all ages of the Christian church, even when the hand of power wielded its weapons of silence, extermination, and death against "heretics," there were witnesses for the contrary doctrine, — that God is one, not three; and that our Lord Jesus Christ, "anointed with the oil

* JOHN WESLEY, in his Sermons on Several Occasions, vol. i. p. 238, says that the "Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, [is] discovered to us in the very first line of his [God's] written word, . . . as well as in *every part* of his subsequent revelations, given by the mouth of *all* his holy prophets and apostles."

of gladness above his fellows," was inferior, in nature and in attributes, to the Infinite Being whom he called his Father and his God. Many of these witnesses have also, in the most public manner, declared their reasons for their belief; have appealed to Scripture passages which they regarded as proving the simple Oneness of God, and his unqualified Supremacy over all other beings; and have endeavored to interpret such texts as were adduced in favor of a Trinity in Unity, and of the Deity of Christ and the Holy Ghost, in harmony with what they thought to be the dictates of reason and the teachings of revelation.

The usual mode of answering the arguments and interpretations of Unitarians has probably been that to which we have just adverted, — the adducing of an immense quantity and variety of proof, of which a large portion had no possible relation to the subject. But, unhappily, this lack of discrimination in judging of evidence, this wholesale treatment of Sacred Scripture, — so common, indeed, amongst all sects and on all theological subjects, — was not a matter the most objectionable. Unacquainted with the principles of a generous toleration, or forgetful of the mild and beneficent spirit of their great Master, the dominant party, when they did not happen to use the sword of the civil magistrate, were frequently tempted to employ other weapons equally effective in the subjugation of free thought, and the annihilation of opinions regarded as heretical. Many of the older books of polemical Trinitarians are filled with accusations against their opponents, of denying the Lord that bought them, — of wilfully wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction, — of being disbelievers in the Bible; schismatics, blasphemers, infidels; who, unless converted to the true faith, — or, as we should interpret it, unless they believed in opposition to the evidence presented to their own minds, or professed opinions contrary to their own convictions, — would be consigned by the God of love to everlasting woe.

In speaking thus, we should regret to be thought justly chargeable with the very fault which we condemn. We do not mention it for the purpose of throwing any odium either on Trinitarianism or on its

advocates. The truth is, that in past times the principles of a genuine religious liberty were but faintly understood, — scarcely recognized except by a few of those who suffered for their adherence to an unpopular cause. Had Unitarians been the prevailing sect, it is not improbable, that — though, from the more benign character of their belief and their professions of greater liberality, less worthy of excuse — they might have been equally, or nearly as, regardless of the claims of brotherly love and universal toleration. We would not, therefore, rake up the evils of the past, in order to blame the present; we would not collect the errors of the fathers, to accumulate them on the heads of their children; but show, on the contrary, that though still, now and then, may be heard the cry of heresy and the doom of damnation, a more kind, charitable, considerate, and Christian spirit is working its way into the hearts of all sects; and that, despite of a theology which would exclude from heaven all who spurn at priestly power and creed-control, many Trinitarians are actuated by a generous impulse — the impulse of Christian principle — to overthrow the barriers which separate them from Unitarians, and, whilst sincerely attached to the characteristics of their faith, glad to acknowledge, that out of the pale of their own temple, as well as within its precincts, there are great and good men; sincere disciples of the Lord Jesus; and heirs, with themselves, of the same immortal glory.

Accordingly, in the following pages, a portion of the beautiful and noble lessons which have issued from the more catholic minds of the class to which we have referred will be presented for two reasons: First, To aid and encourage the reader to cherish a spirit, which, while it prayerfully and dispassionately seeks for light, increasing light, and brooks no human control over its own thoughts and utterances, would grant to others the same privileges which it claims for itself; humble in the possession of its faith, zealous in the promotion of what it deems to be truth, and universal in its love. Secondly, To show, that, if, according to the admissions of their opponents, Unitarians are many of them pure, devout Christians, as well as virtuous and honorable

men, it is *possible* that the particular views of religion which they profess may not, after all, be so bad as they have been represented; that Unitarianism, though often vilified as the refuge of fools and sciolists, and the half-way house to infidelity, if not to atheism, may contain *some* of the elements of truth; nay, may perhaps be the very truth, though now imperfectly conceived and uttered, which was once proclaimed by Heaven through the lips and writings of prophets and apostles, and manifested in the teachings, the works, the prayers, the sufferings, the life and death, of the Son of God.

We have said, that, along with a great deal of uncharitable language, it was usual to reply to the arguments and interpretations of Unitarians, by adducing from the Bible, in favor of a Trinity in Unity, a vast number of passages, which had nothing whatever to do with the question at issue. In the heat of controversy, where victory is aimed at as much as the possession of truth, and where sectarian passions are as likely as the qualities of discretion and sober judgment to be enlisted in the cause of dogmas, this over-doing in the collection of proof-texts is to be more or less expected, not only from Trinitarians as such, but from all who, with more zeal than knowledge, are engaged in the defence or the demolition of particular points in theology. Amongst all denominations will be found men who have more intensity and warmth of feeling than candor or wisdom, — more zeal to propagate their opinions by every means at hand, than a disposition to acknowledge difficulties, or a spirit to welcome truth from whatever quarter it may proceed. But it will not follow, that, because some portions of the evidence adduced for a certain doctrine are sophistical or irrelevant, all the other portions are equally false or invalid, and the doctrine itself without any foundation. The fallacy of one argument does not imply the fallacy of all other arguments. When, therefore, an injudicious commentator or controversialist adduces Ps. xxxvi. 9 ("With thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light") in favor of a personal Trinity, or Ps. xlv. 1 ("My heart is inditing a good matter") in favor of a plurality of hypostases

in the Godhead, or of the eternal generation of Christ, it would by no means be justifiable for one to infer, that all other appeals to Scripture, in support of these doctrines, are as futile and absurd. The only fair and legitimate effect of the production of arguments so obviously groundless should be, not disbelief in the doctrines themselves, but an apprehension of the *possibility* that there may be a lack of more substantial evidence, when so much stress is laid on what is obviously trifling; and a determination, on the part of the inquirer, to examine and sift that testimony which appears to bear greater marks of plausibility or of truth.

This much we are willing to concede; for it is an unquestionable fact, that every good and great cause — every truth in science, in morals, or in religion — is liable to be injured by the production of unnecessary and futile evidence. It is therefore not impossible, that, while for its support much of what is insignificant and useless has been adduced, the doctrine itself of a Triune God may yet be true. It is not impossible that the removal of the false supports which have been placed in the temple of Trinitarianism, — their destruction by the hands of the candid and distinguished of those who worship at its altar, — may have the tendency rather to exhibit the strength and durability of the fabric than the weakness of its foundation.

We freely admit all this, in order to show that we would not extend the argument against Trinitarianism, employed in this work, beyond its legitimate bounds. But, at the same time, we have no hesitation in affirming, that this argument — drawn from the involuntary concessions of our opponents — assumes an air of far greater probability, and rises into evidence which may justly be considered as presumptive, when it is derived from the startling and unquestionable fact, that the texts on which Trinitarianism *must* rest if there be any truth at all in the doctrine, have been disposed of in a precisely similar way as those to which we have referred. Let us suppose, for example, what will scarcely be denied, that there is no passage in the whole compass

of the Bible so likely to countenance the doctrine of Christ's identity of nature with the essence of the Father as John x. 30, "I and the Father are one." Now, if it be found that the believers in this doctrine — those amongst them who by universal consent are regarded as the most learned and judicious critics — are forced to acknowledge that the oneness spoken of is a moral, not a metaphysical, union, — a union similar to that which Christ prayed to God might subsist between his followers and himself, — then is there a strong presumption that the Scriptures contain no evidence whatever for the dogma of Christ's real or essential identity with the Father.

Let us take another illustration, in respect to the evidence for the doctrine of a Triune God. We will assume as a fact, what indeed no one can gainsay, that the grounds for controversy on this point have been greatly narrowed. All, at any rate, admit that certain texts are, or appear to be, much more favorable than others to the doctrine in question. Of these it is impossible to select two which are more to the purpose than Matt. xxviii. 19, and 1 John v. 7; — the former containing the command of Jesus to the apostles, that they should "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" and the latter stating that "there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." If, in the volume of divine revelation, there be any thing which approaches in phraseology or in meaning to the terms used in the formulas of modern Orthodoxy, it is surely the language and significance of these passages; and, more regardful of the nominal resemblances than of the real differences, a Trinitarian might, with some show of reason, exclaim, "Here, here, at least, if nowhere else in the Bible, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, are declared to be three persons in one God, the same in substance, and equal in power and glory." And yet what are the facts of the case, as admitted by the interpretations and criticisms of not a few Trinitarians themselves? That neither of these passages demonstrates the doctrine in question; that neither of these contains

a syllable respecting equality of perfections, or unity of essence; that neither utters a word about the essential Deity of the Son or of the Holy Ghost; that neither teaches the dogma of there being three persons in one God; — that the baptismal formula merely implies the great truth, which all believers were to profess, that Christianity originated from God, was communicated to men by Christ, and was confirmed by the gifts and influences of the Holy Spirit; and that the oneness of the three heavenly witnesses was nothing more than a unity of testimony.*

But not only have many learned, judicious, and candid writers in the orthodox body been unable to discern satisfactory proof for the doctrines of a Triune God, and the personal Deity of Christ and the Holy Ghost, in those texts, singly and separately considered, which have been deemed by others as perfectly demonstrative: not a few have conceded that there are whole classes of passages and entire books of the Bible which afford no evidence whatever for Trinitarianism. Thus it has been acknowledged not only by Roman Catholic but by Protestant divines, of whom the number is increasing every day with the increase of knowledge as to the true modes of investigating the sense of Scripture, that the Old Testament affords nought but the faintest glimmerings of the dogma of a Triune God; by others that it is altogether silent on the subject of a plurality in the divine nature; by others, again, that the great Teacher himself, the Founder and Perfecter of our Faith, taught not these and other related tenets of Orthodoxy; and that the apostles, even after they were furnished with the fullest supplies of inspiration, when they obtained

* For the sake of illustration, and to give the utmost possible benefit to the Trinitarian argument, we have taken for granted that the passage was written by St. John. But, by a majority of critics of all denominations, this is denied; and the amount of evidence which they adduce for their opinion cannot but be regarded as sufficient to banish it for ever from a place in the Sacred Volume. Strict accuracy requires it to be said, that the interpolation is contained in a portion both of the seventh and the eighth verse, as follows: — "In heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth"

such ideas of the nature of Christ's kingdom as they had been incapable of comprehending from the lips of their Master, did not, in their oral discourses, deliver those doctrines concerning God, Christ, and the Spirit, which have been commonly regarded by "evangelical" writers as saving truths of the gospel. The eminent and good men who make these admissions rest their faith chiefly on a few texts in the writings of John and Paul, — texts, however, of a kind which, from their obscurity or their susceptibility of being rendered or explained in different and contrary ways, cannot, according to principles professedly adopted by almost all Christians of the present day, be consistently regarded as affording undoubted evidence for the truth of any controverted point. Generally speaking, indeed, the principles of interpretation which are now laid down by the most intelligent and the most esteemed critics in orthodox churches, while leaving intact the web of divine truth, as to the Unity of God, which is so beautifully woven by patriarchs, prophets, evangelists, and apostles, necessarily sweep away unnumbered cobwebs as to essences, hypostases, personalities, and distinctions, which have been spun by dogmatic and mystical divines, and hung by them on every leaf of Sacred Writ.

But still more: with scarcely a dissentient voice, the most distinguished theologians of all sects have acknowledged that reason and revelation alike proclaim the existence of one, and of only one, Supreme Mind, one self-existent Being, one unrivalled and infinite Intelligence, the original Source of all existence, — of all that is great and good and blessed; and, with a harmony but partially interrupted, they have also acknowledged, — what, indeed, seems inseparable from the former admission, — that the doctrine of three co-equal and co-eternal persons in the divine nature — the doctrine that calls one person, God; another person, God; and a third, God; and which pronounces these three to be only one God — is a doctrine that cannot be discovered by the use of the highest powers of the human intellect; is a mystery respecting which philosophy and metaphysics may speculate, but which they cannot prove to be true; on which the

heavens shed no light; and at which "Reason stands aghast, and Faith herself is half confounded."

Now, we would ask if it be at all probable that a doctrine can be founded in truth, — can with propriety be termed a doctrine of revelation, — can really be an article of the Jewish or the Christian faith, which so many of its clearest-sighted advocates concede to be undeveloped in the universe of matter and of mind, — not recognized by Abraham and the other patriarchs, — not announced by Moses or any of his fellow-prophets, — in fact, not known to any of the ancient Hebrews, — not revealed by Jesus during his ministry, or preached by his earliest disciples; and which is to be inferred only from a few dark and ambiguous passages in the New Testament, or rather in the writings of but two of the apostles.

We would, however, avoid rashness in drawing the inference, — so as to settle the question at issue, — that Trinitarianism is unquestionably false because its best and most judicious advocates have rejected as irrelevant so much of that Scriptural proof which had so frequently been insisted on by others in every variety of form. But at the same time we cannot avoid concluding, that the whole fabric of Trinitarianism must be exceedingly weak, and rest on an insecure foundation, when those supports which have been deemed the strongest are acknowledged by its owners to be altogether powerless; when not only beam after beam, but pillar after pillar, are overthrown, not by the rude, unhallowed hands of "heretics," but by the softer and more gentle touches of those who would fain be sheltered under its roof; and when the firmest ground on which their temple stands has been proved to be, not a rock, but sand, by the clear-sightedness and candor of the very men who, amid the falling ruins and crumbling fragments, seem vainly to think that they will find a refuge under those wings from which others of their friends have been glad to escape.

It may appear strange, that, after giving up as weak and irrelevant the strongest and the most pertinent proofs that can be adduced in support of an opinion, good and wise men should still cling to it with

a tenacity which cannot be loosened by evidence of a contrary nature; that, after abandoning their best arms as perfectly useless, and their most secure positions as wholly untenable, they should not at last be constrained to yield up the whole matter of debate, with all their instruments of aggression and defence, instead of having recourse, as they do, to ground unfirm as a morass, and to weapons weak as straw. But this inconsistency is often observable in predilections of various kinds. Every day do we see men, judicious and sensible in other respects, tenaciously holding opinions, which they have been in the habit of cherishing from an early period, not only in religion and theology, but in politics, in literature, in matters of business, and in the common affairs of life, long after they have acknowledged that the main grounds for their adherence to them have given way. And thus it seems to be in regard to those who, abandoning proof after proof, text after text, — some of these being passages of Scripture which have been generally adduced as the very bulwarks of the Trinitarian doctrine, — still cling with affection, if not with ardor, to the doctrine itself. To their minds it may be hallowed by the sentiment of filial love, by the reminiscences of youthful piety, by the associations of kindred and of social brotherhood, and by the spiritual nutriment which they have drawn from such portions of truth as have been blended and incorporated with it, but which, by an illusion of the imagination, they suppose to be derived from the doctrine itself. The mere fact, then, of a belief in dogmas whose chief proofs have been conceded to be weak, irrelevant, or nugatory, can afford no reason for supposing that arguments of a more shadowy and obscure nature are sufficient evidence for the truth of the dogmas themselves.

The character and force of the argument here employed, in supporting the doctrine of the simple Unity of God, will, no doubt, be estimated very differently by different minds; but that it is of no inconsiderable weight may be evinced by the fact, that Christians of all denominations most readily and gladly wield it, when, in combating

with unbelievers, they adduce from the works of eminent Deists testimonies favorable to the supreme excellence of Jesus' character, to the special divinity of his mission, or to the unrivalled holiness and benign influences of his religion. And that this mode of reasoning is universally admitted to be legitimate, except perhaps by those against whom it is urged, may also be shown from the practice of orators, philosophers, prophets, and apostles, ay, and of Christ himself, who have not scrupled to defend the cause of truth and righteousness by appealing to the principles of their adversaries, by arraying against them the inconsistencies and contradictions into which they may have fallen, and using the concessions which they may have made either spontaneously or with reluctance.

We have dwelt at some length on this point, because desirous of exhibiting to the reader the principal aim and nature of the following work. But we have had in view another object, which, though in some respects only subsidiary to the argument spoken of, is of higher importance to the interests of truth; namely, that of presenting the *grounds* on which rest the criticisms and expositions that are deemed favorable to the principles of Unitarianism; of assigning the *reasons* which have led members of orthodox churches to abandon, one after another, the proof-texts once so commonly adduced in support of Trinitarianism. Here the appeal to the *bare* concessions of opponents may be laid aside; for it is evident that the argument drawn from the authority of orthodox writers, however eminent they may have been for their talents and their learning, — from their acknowledgment of doubts and difficulties in regard to the true import of passages which have been often pronounced as alien to Unitarianism, and from their approval or application of modes of exposition destructive to the alleged evidence for the doctrine of a Triune God, — that this argument — the *argumentum ad hominem*, pertinent as we have seen it to be in other cases, and consistent with the highest aims of a truth-loving spirit — should not be deemed as of the same importance, or be urged with the same amount of zeal

as when it is accompanied by evidence for the *justness* of the admissions. Singly wielded, though tending to unsettle the foundations of what is regarded as error, it is perhaps too antagonistic, withdrawing the mind from the true state of the question, and the conditions on which it is to be settled; perplexing, rather than enlightening, the understanding in its search after truth; and not altogether satisfactory to a soul longing for the possession of what is real and positive in matters of religion.

It is therefore natural and proper to ask, Why is any particular interpretation of a passage to be preferred to others? Why are the testimonies which have so generally been relied on as worthy of trust to be no longer entitled to credence and respect? "I am astonished," it may be said by one who has been brought up in "the straitest sect" of the Trinitarian theology, and been duly furnished with the proof-texts in its favor, but who has had only slight opportunities of judging of the discrepancies of opinion and interpretation existing among orthodox writers, — "I am astonished beyond measure when you lay before me the names of a host of Trinitarians, who have, in one way or another, been sapping the very foundations of their own belief; who, for example, in opposition to my Catechism and my Creed, agree with Unitarians in saying in the strongest terms, that the title 'Son of God,' used of Jesus Christ, does not imply his participation or his possession of the divine essence. I know not what to think of it; but, though I have been led to esteem many of these as among the ablest friends of the Trinitarian doctrine, they seem to be snatching from me one of the main supports of my hope and confidence in the Redeemer. Reasons conclusive to *their* minds must have existed for their thus yielding up the old positions, and adopting the views which I, and many of my brethren, have regarded as new and heretical. Now, tell me what these reasons are, that my own mind may be satisfied whether they are false or true."

To a request so amply justified by the duty of individual examination, answers will be given, whenever practicable, by the authors who

have made the concessions; sometimes colored, indeed, as may be expected, by the hues of a peculiar phraseology, but agreeing in the main with the interpretations or the arguments which have been proposed and urged by Unitarians. In some cases, however, they will be presented without any formal statement of reasons, either because they are not assigned by the writers from whom we quote; because they are so evidently just as to require no proof; or because, having been already stated by one or more of the witnesses cited, it will be unnecessary to reiterate them, as it may well be supposed, that others, in propounding similar interpretations, were influenced by similar reasons.

To afford the reader a more comprehensive idea of the plan we mean to pursue in conducting our argument, it may not be improper to exhibit the order in which the subjects will be treated: —

1. We will, *in the first place*, exhibit the sentiments of distinguished Trinitarians, to show that the spirit of sectarianism is inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity; meaning, by the term "sectarianism," not an honest preference of one form of Christian faith to another; not a well-grounded attachment to a particular denomination, as better adapted than others to promote the principles of piety, benevolence, and truth; not a calm and continuous effort to diffuse such opinions as, after due inquiry, we think best calculated to advance the glory of God and the good of man, — but an absorbing interest in the pettiest of theologic peculiarities; a fiery zeal for externals and ceremonies, mysteries and mysticisms; a fond predilection for the differences which separate Christians from one another, and a supreme unconcern for the agreements which unite them; a punctilious payment of "tithe and anise and cummin," with a non-observance of the "weightier matters of the law" and the gospel, — "justice, mercy, and fidelity;" a demoniac desire to burn the bodies and to damn the souls of those who will not bow down before the idols of their vain and narrow imagination.

2. Having quoted sentiments fraught with the purest spirit of Christianity and of catholicism, — some of them glowing with love to Christian disciples of every name, and others with good-will to the universal family of God, whatever religion they may profess; some of them giving expression to a righteous indignation at the gross forms of bigotry, of personal hate and destruction, which marked the darker times of our forefathers, and others rebuking the more subdued and refined, but not less galling, species of persecution which is sometimes seen at the present day, and which consists of the denial of Christian intercourse and Christian communion to those who, though sincerely aiming to worship the God and Father of all, to reverence his beloved Son and Messenger, and to cherish, in all their thoughts and pursuits, the holy and benignant spirit of their Master, have dared to differ from the opinions which are generally received; — having cited these golden sentiments, as set forth in the writings of orthodox believers, we will proceed, *in the second place*, to state the views of the same authors, or of others belonging to the same churches, in respect to the right and duty of every man to employ his powers in the attainment of religious truth; to be animated by such dispositions, and to adopt such means, as are most conducive to this end; and to avoid, as far as in him lies, those tendencies of his nature, and those influences around him, which are calculated to impede his progress, or to lead him into error.

3. As immediately and intimately connected with this department of our work, we will next prove, by the aid of a few of the most eminent Trinitarian Protestants, that reason and revelation are the only legitimate standards of religious doctrine; that they are perfectly consistent with, and never antagonistic to, each other; that the disparagement of the intellectual powers is followed by the most pernicious results; that, if interpreted by the lights which can be thrown over it, Holy Writ is sufficient, without the decrees of synods and councils, the authority of popes and churches, or the dicta of fathers, priests, and reformers, to be a rule of faith and communion for all the disciples

of Jesus; but that, on the other hand, the exercise of private judgment will not guard us against many errors of belief and practice, unless we be careful to study the Bible with the simple view of learning the sense intended by the writers, or by the speakers whose sentiments they report; and to discriminate, in that collection of most holy books, between the local and the universal, the temporary and the eternal, the human and the divine, — between the words and thoughts of man and the wisdom and revelation of God.

4. We shall then be prepared to inquire whether the Christianity of the New Testament be a simple or a mysterious religion, — whether, in its essence and character, it be speculative or active, theoretical or practical; a system of dogmas, or a development of principles; a series of unknown and unintelligible propositions which must be subscribed to and believed in, or a revelation of truths which common minds may understand, sincere and honest hearts appreciate, and all men reduce to practice. And the result of this inquiry will be found to be, according to the excellent observations of some distinguished Trinitarians, that the religion of Christ is, in its sublime simplicity, and in its conformity with the highest reason, adapted alike to the capacity of the many and the few, — of the peasant and the philosopher.

5. Christianity is therefore simple, consistent with itself, and easily understood; while, on the contrary, Trinitarianism is a system of dogmas which are either unintelligible or self-contradictory. The "Trinity" of the New Testament and of the Apostolic Church — if we may use a term unknown to Scripture — consists of a moral and not a metaphysical union; a union of will and purpose between the universal Father, his best-beloved Son, and (to complete the figure) the spirit of power and wisdom which God imparted to Christ, and, through Christ, to the apostles. But the Trinity of creeds, — the Trinity which has no place in the New Testament, — the Trinity which would either identify the Son and Servant of God with his Father and Proprietor, and the Holy Ghost, as a separate person, with

the Father and the Son; or would represent three conscious persons as only one conscious Being; or three infinite beings as only one God; or three names or characters of the Deity, the one as sending, and the others as sent, — the one as inspiring, and the others as inspired, — the one as a Petitioner, the other as a person or being to whom petitions are presented, and the third as neither praying nor being prayed to, — this Trinity of human creeds, in whatever manner it may have been exhibited, is a doctrine which shocks the unperverted mind, and is as much repugnant to reason and common sense as is the tenet of Transubstantiation itself. This conclusion may be fairly deduced from, if it is not always expressed in, the language made use of by the Roman Catholics and Protestants, all professed Trinitarians, from whom we mean to quote.

6. Happily for the consistency of God's ways, or for the faith of his human family, the doctrine of a Triune God is not only abhorrent to the principles of our nature, but it is not a doctrine of revelation. It is not expressly disclosed in the Bible, if, indeed, it can be proved at all from the records by any just principles of interpretation. Some Roman Catholics say that it cannot be demonstrated from Scripture, but must be received on the authority of the church; and many orthodox Protestants grant, that, so far from being clearly revealed, it can only be inferred from the comparison of one passage with another. It is reasoned out of Sacred Scripture. But reason recoils at the doctrine, and Scripture does not reveal it.

7. The Unity of God, however, is the basis of all religion, natural or revealed. It is the express doctrine of the Bible, and harmonizes with the highest conceptions which we can form of the great First Cause. From the one Self-existent have all other beings had their origin and their powers, from the worm up to the archangel, including Christ himself. So say the most enlightened Trinitarians, however inconsistent they may be in their speculations; and hence probably the painful emotions of their hearts and the scepticism of their understandings as to the propriety of paying supreme homage to any other

than the Infinite One, without regard to a distinction of persons in the Deity, — to any other than the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

8. The best-beloved Son of God, the unrivalled Teacher, the highest Image of the divine glory and goodness, the destined Redeemer of a world fettered by sin, was, in his nature and his attributes, in his offices on earth and his functions in heaven, inferior to the Father, the only Self-existent and the single original Cause of all things. The true grandeur of Christ's character, the chief dignity of his person, so far as it has been taught in the records concerning him, lies not in his having assumed to himself perfect equality with his Maker and his God, for such a notion could never have entered for a moment into his humble and devout mind, — but in accomplishing the great and benevolent work to which he was appointed, in perfect, unqualified dependence on, and submission to, that Being whom in his prayers and thanksgivings he addressed as "the Father" and "the only true God." Many Trinitarians have acknowledged, either explicitly or implicitly, and in every variety of form, the entire subordination of the Lord Jesus to Almighty God, and his essential as well as official inferiority to him. How they can reconcile such notions with their professed belief in the equality of Christ with God, it is not for us to say; for we cannot tell. But we know that all error is inconsistent with itself, and we thank them for the admissions which they have made. We rejoice that they thus yield, though involuntarily and imperfectly, to the Unitarianism of the Gospels, and, indeed, of the whole New Testament.

9. Among the numerous significations of the word "Spirit" in the Bible, it is an acknowledged fact, that in a host of passages this term, which is sometimes intensified in its import by being changed into the phrases "Holy Spirit" and "Spirit of God," denotes the various influences and gifts which God imparted to his chosen servants; and, in a few cases, signifies God himself, without any reference to hypostatical or personal distinctions in the Deity. Al Trinitarians

will grant these facts; and some have openly confessed that there are certain deficiencies in the Scripture evidence for a third person in the Godhead; while others have represented the Holy Ghost, though according to them entitled to all the attributes of the Divinity, as deriving his existence and his powers either from the Father, or from the Father and the Son.

In thus presenting the order of the subjects discussed in this volume, we have mentioned only a few of the most prominent points; but they are all intimately related to each other, and contain the gist of what seems to us a strong presumptive argument against the doctrine of the Trinity. To unfold and apply this argument, — to take up, according to the order in which they occur in the Bible, all the texts which have been adduced on behalf of the doctrine of a Triune God, or of the Supreme Divinity of Christ and the Holy Ghost; and, by the assistance of the most learned and distinguished writers in orthodox churches, to show that these passages, whether regarded singly or in combination with others, afford no just grounds for believing in the mysteries of Trinitarianism; that the principles of criticism and interpretation adopted by scholars and divines are, at least in particular instances and applications, essentially the same as those employed by Unitarians, and lead, if consistently followed up, to a recognition, in the strictest sense of the terms, of the great Scripture truths, that "Jehovah is One," and that the Father is "the only true God," — to do this would be a work requiring several additional volumes, which are in course of preparation, and which we intend, at some future time, by the divine blessing, to lay before the public.* As setting forth the general principles on which the whole argument rests, the present volume may be regarded as complete, and is therefore published by itself.

* In the "Concessions of Trinitarians," which the writer published in 1842, this has been partially done; but, that work being out of print, he is now occupied in increasing it to such an extent as to justify the remark made above.

We greatly mistake if the lessons inculcated in this volume by so many good and learned men, and the criticisms and comments on certain passages of Scripture which will be quoted in the other portions of the work from their writings, will not tend to prove, that in the human heart of Christendom, though choked up by the rubbish of man's device, there are springs of pure feeling and generous thought which now and then bubble up and flow into the great channel of love and truth, diffusing, wherever they spread, fertility and happiness on all around; — that, notwithstanding the walls of partition which have been erected by bigotry and narrow-minded creeds between the followers of the same Lord and Master, there are in the soul, affections, cherished and warmed by the gospel, which overleap these barriers, and attract men and Christians together; — that among the corruptions of Christianity and the diversities of sectaries, there still exist the stamina of evangelical truth; that there are principles of religion which are held in common by all denominations, however obscured for a time by the mists of error and the fumes of strife; that these principles are the chief glory of Christianity and of Unitarianism; and that the day is arriving, though in the eyes of the present generation it may be slow in its approach, when the dominion of bigotry will wholly cease; when the prayer of Jesus for catholic union among his disciples will be answered; and when, instead of attributing infallibility to erring men, Supreme Divinity to the holy but humble Son and Servant of the Most High, and eternal glory and honor to a Trinity in Unity or a Unity in Trinity, universal Christendom will say, in the language of the Apocalypse, "WE GIVE THEE THANKS, O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, WHO ART, AND WAST, AND ART TO COME! BECAUSE THOU HAST TAKEN TO THEE THY GREAT POWER, AND HAST REIGNED."

UNITARIAN PRINCIPLES

CONFIRMED BY

TRINITARIAN TESTIMONIES.

CHAPTER I.

THE SPIRIT OF SECTARIANISM INCONSISTENT WITH THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY.

SECT. I. — THE RELIGION OF JESUS THAT OF LOVE.

> The new religion — final, perfect, pure —
> Was that of Christ and love. His great command,
> His all-sufficing precept, — was't not love ?
>
> P. J. BAILEY.

CHRISTIANITY is a gospel of peace and charity. It commands us to love and to do good to all men, even our very enemies; to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for those that despitefully use us and persecute us. And can those be its disciples who scatter nothing but hatred and malice, confusion and disorder, wherever they come, and make it a matter of conscience to root out and destroy from off the earth all those that differ from them? . . . . . As to the business of charity, God forbid that any differences in religion whatever . . . should ever make us deny that to our fellow-Christians. . . . There is no honest, sincere Christian, how erroneous soever he may be, but what at least is persuaded that he is in the right; and looks upon us to be as far from the truth by differing from him, as we esteem him for not agreeing with us. Now if, upon the sole account of such differences, it be lawful for us to hate another, we must for the very same reason allow it to be as lawful for him also to hate us. Thus shall we at once invert the characteristic of our religion, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,

if ye have love one to another." . . . How much rather ought we to consider, with our apostle, the love of our dear Master to us, even whilst we were yet his enemies, and love those whom we ought to hope, notwithstanding all their errors, are yet still his friends; and not think those unworthy of our charity whom we piously presume God will not think unworthy of his favor? . . . If they are mistaken, I am sure our uncharitableness is not the way to convince them of their error, but may rather indispose them to consider the weight of our arguments as they ought, whilst they see so little regard in our affections towards them. . . . . O blessed state of the church militant here on earth! — the glorious antepast of that peace and piety which God has prepared for his church triumphant in heaven! Who would not wish to see those days when a general reformation, and a true zeal, and a perfect charity, passing through the world, we should all be united in the same faith, the same worship, the same communion and fellowship one with another? — when, all pride and prejudice, all interests and designs, being submitted to the honor of God and the discharge of our duty, the Holy Scriptures shall again triumph over the vain traditions of men, and religion no longer take its denomination from little sects and factions, but we shall all be content with the same common primitive names of Christians and brethren, and live together as becomes our character, in brotherly love and Christian charity with one another? — ARCHBISHOP WAKE: *Sermons and Discourses*, pp. 102, 191–4, 202.

I must hasten to recommend to you another thing of unspeakable importance to the well-being of Christian society, — a spirit of universal love. Let not bigotry or party-zeal be so much as once named amongst you; for it becometh not saints. Our Lord was a stranger to it. Whosoever did the will of his Father, the same was his brother, his sister, his mother. Wherever he saw the marks of true faith, though in a centurion or a Syrophenician, who were aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, how did he publish and commend it! Be followers, then, of him, my brethren, as dear children; and love all who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth, although they should not in all things follow with us. . . . Why should not the children of God, notwithstanding their little differences, unite in one common interest against spiritual wickednesses in high places? Oh that all who call themselves Christians were thus minded! — GEORGE WHITEFIELD: *Letter to the Religious Societies of England; in Works*, vol. iv. pp. 29, 30.

It is impossible to conceive a greater contrast between the spirit which his [Christ's] instructions breathe, and that spirit of pride and domination which, not many centuries afterwards, became the predominant spirit of what then came to be denominated the church. Again and again did Christ admonish his apostles and other followers to live as brethren and equals, not to affect a superiority over their fellow-disciples or over one another; inasmuch as, in this, his kingdom would differ in its fundamental maxims from all the kingdoms of the world; that that person alone would there be deemed the greatest whose deportment should be the humblest, and he alone superior who should prove most serviceable to the rest.... When the disciples privately contended among themselves who should be greatest, he took occasion to warn them against ambition.... The same maxims were warmly inculcated by his apostles; and in their time, under the happy influence of their instructions, generally prevailed among Christians. — DR. GEO. CAMPBELL: *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, Lect. 2.

Thus you see [referring to Luke xvii. 15–19], though the Jews learnt no humility, no gratitude, yet the Samaritan, ignorant as he was then thought, misinformed as he is now reckoned — yet the Samaritan was deeply impressed with both. The Almighty himself taught him, and he was obedient to the divine Instructor. The pride of religion would make the Jews brand him with the factious name of heretic or schismatic; but, were he heretic or schismatic, he offered to heaven as grateful a sacrifice as was ever laid on the altar at Jerusalem by prophet or by saint. The contentions about the forms of religion destroy its essence. Authorized by the example of Jesus Christ, we will send men to the Samaritan to find out how to worship. Though your church was pure, without spot or imperfection, yet, if your heart is not turned to God, the worship is hateful, and the prayers are an abomination. The homage of the darkest Pagan, worshipping he knows not what, but still worshipping the unknown Power that formed him, if he bows with humility, if he praises with gratitude, his homage will ascend grateful to heaven; while the dead, careless formality of prayer, offered up in the proudest Christian temples, shall be rejected as an offering unholy. For think you that the Almighty esteems names and sects? No: it is the heart that he requires, — it is the heart alone that he accepts. And much consolation does this afford to the contemplative mind of man. We may be very ignorant in spiritual matters, if that ignorance cannot be removed, and yet may be very

safe. We may not know in what words to clothe our desires in prayer, or where to find language worthy of being presented to the Majesty of heaven. But, amidst the clouds that surround us, here is our comfort: In every nation, he that worshippeth with humility, worshippeth aright; he that praiseth with gratitude, praiseth well. The pride of establishments may despise him; but the wisdom and the righteousness of heaven will hear, and will approve him. It was to the humble, thankful Samaritan, though separated from the true church, — yes, it was to him alone, because he alone returned to glorify God, — that Jesus Christ said, "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." Thus in a moment vanished, and became of no effect, the temple of the Jews, built by prophetic direction; its ritual, given by their illuminated legislator; all gave way to the profound humility and the sublime gratitude of what they called an unbeliever, — of what Jesus Christ called the only faithful servant of God among them. — PREBENDARY COMINGS, of St. Patrick's, Dublin: *Sermons on the Spiritual Kingdom of the Messiah.*

Dr. George Campbell, from whom we borrow this fine extract, says, in his work on Ecclesiastical History, that the sentiments quoted "convey an idea of the church truly rational, enlarged, and sublime; such as strongly distinguishes it from all the pitiful and contracted pales, so uncharitably erected by the different sectaries of all known denominations, Popish and Protestant, established and unestablished. For it is not a legal establishment, as some vainly imagine, or any thing merely external, that either makes or unmakes a sectary in the Scriptural sense: it is solely the spirit by which a man is actuated."

Benevolence is the great principle on which Christianity is founded; and it tends equally to the honor of religion, and the advantage of society, that Christ exacts from his disciples, in their conduct towards each other, the same illustrious quality that was displayed on the part of God in the redemption of mankind. The impetuosity of wrath, the bitterness of evil-speaking, and the cruelty of revenge, are peremptorily forbidden in every page of the gospel. That man is there pointed out by the sacred writers as the most acceptable servant of Christ, who cultivates a large and generous love towards his fellow-creatures; who seeks for opportunities of doing them good; who diligently retreats from every temptation to injure them; and who, by a happy union of prudence with good-nature, lives peaceably with all men..... If you would act up to the spirit of the gospel,... you must not suffer the love of your neighbor to be narrowed and enfeebled by

any fortuitous circumstance of rank or locality or religious persuasion. You must consider acquaintances and strangers, friends and foes, countrymen and foreigners, the members of your own and every other Christian community, the followers of Confucius and Mahomet as well as of Christ, heretics and schismatics, dogmatists and sceptics, monotheists and polytheists, the enlightened and peaceful inhabitant of towns in a civilized society and the wild savage roaming for his prey through the trackless forest, the sceptered monarch and the humble cottager, — you must consider all of them as forming one great flock, placed here in one spacious fold, under one good Shepherd, who, in his own good time and for his own good purposes, will hereafter separate the better from the worse, and consign them to their proper stations, according to the measure which he only can know of their respective merits and demerits. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Sermon on Rom.* xii. 18, *and Sermon on the Two Commandments; in Works*, vol. vi. pp. 679, and 364–5.

It is delightful to meet with sentiments so just and beautiful as these, — with principles of candor so fraught with the spirit of Jesus, — with views of humanity so accordant with the whole genius of the Christian faith.

Let truth be shrined in argument; for this is its appropriate glory. And it is a sore disparagement inflicted upon it by the hand of vindictive theologians, when, instead of this, it is shrined in anathema, or brandished as a weapon of dread and of destruction over the heads of all who are compelled to do it homage. The terrible denunciations of Athanasius have not helped — they have injured the cause. The Godhead of Christ is not thus set forth in the New Testament. It is nowhere proposed in the shape of a mere dictatorial article, or as a naked dogma, for the understanding alone; and at one place it is introduced as an episode for the enforcement of a moral virtue. In this famous passage [Phil. ii. 3—8], the practical lesson occupies the station of principal, as the main or capital figure of the piece; and the doctrine on which so many would effervesce all their zeal, even to exhaustion, stands to it but in the relation of a subsidiary. . . . In these verses, there is a collateral lesson for our faith; but the chief, the direct lesson is a lesson of charity, which is greater than faith. . . . . We protest, by the meekness and the gentleness of Christ; by the tears of him who wept at Lazarus' tomb, and over the approaching ruin of Jerusalem; by every word of blessing that he uttered, and by every footstep of this wondrous visitor over the surface of a land on which

he went about doing good continually, — we protest in the name of all these unequivocal demonstrations, that they do him an injustice who propound this message [the gospel message] in any other way than as a message of friendship to our species. He came not to condemn, but to save; not to destroy, but to keep alive. — DR. THOS. CHALMERS: *Select Works*, vol. iii. pp. 260–1, 263, New York edition.

From the beautiful sentiments here set forth, it is evident, that, strongly attached as this good and great man was to Calvinistic and Trinitarian theology, Dr. Chalmers regarded the virtues of meekness and humility, exemplified by Jesus Christ and recommended by the Apostle Paul, as of far higher importance than a belief in the doctrine of Christ's Supreme Deity; and that he felt no sympathy with that spirit of exclusiveness and of denunciation which has so often impregnated the "Orthodoxy" of his church. In passing, however, it may be remarked, that his interpretation of Paul's language is founded on a misconception of its meaning. This will be shown under Phil. ii. 6, in a succeeding volume.

Instead of imbibing, countenancing, or warranting intolerance and bigotry, he [Christ] taught, in all instances, their odiousness and guilt; and enjoined, with respect to every subject and person, the most absolute moderation, liberality, and candor; not, indeed, the fashionable liberality of licentious men in modern times, — a professed indifference to truth and holiness, but a benevolent and catholic spirit towards every man, and a candid and just one towards every argument and opinion. Distinctions of nations, sects, or party, as such, were to him nothing: distinctions of truth and falsehood, right and wrong, were to him every thing. According to this scheme, he framed his instructions and his life; and the same catholic spirit and freedom from intolerance characterize the writings of his apostles. — T. HARTWELL HORNE: *Introduction to the Holy Scriptures*, vol. i. p. 167.

Christianity itself condemns as decisively the evil tempers generated by religious disagreements, as it condemns any other immoralities; clearly, itself is a religion of love and meekness; and moreover it contains (however little they have hitherto been regarded) sufficient and very precise provisions, securing to Christians liberty of conscience, while cordial fellowship is not disturbed. The religion of Christ should therefore bear none of the blame accruing from religious strifes. — ISAAC TAYLOR: *Lectures on Spiritual Christianity*, p. 182, New York edition.

True love seeketh not its own. It rejoices in the truth, by whomsoever professed or disseminated. If Christ is preached, whether in

pretence or in truth, it rejoices, yea, and will rejoice. It does not rebuke a man because he prefers to labor in a field different from that of his neighbor, or cut down the spiritual harvest with a different implement, or wear a costume somewhat plainer or more costly. It does not meet the report of a victory in the Christian cause with cold indifference, or with a hesitating approval, till it has first learned what particular sect has the agency, or will receive the benefit. It nobly overlooks all such things. It plants itself on no such narrow grounds. Its object is not to make proselytes, but to save souls; not to count up converts to this or that dogma, but to honor the Redeemer of the world. Wherever, in whomsoever, it can discern the lineaments of his blessed image, it welcomes him to communion, and rejoices in his prosperity. This is the spirit of Christ and of his apostles, unless the New Testament is wholly misinterpreted. In proportion as you love the cause of Christ as such, you may believe that your love is sincere, and will stand the last fiery test. In proportion as it is concerned with a sect *as* such, and pours out all its sympathy on its own peculiar and selected friends, may its genuineness be questioned. To confine your affections to one branch of the true church may be a proof of spurious love, as it certainly is of a narrow understanding. It may be the evidence of an arrogant Pharisaism, rather than of a Christian temper. The spirit of Christ was sympathizing, conciliatory, all-embracing. He never turned coldly away because a suppliant was a poor Syrophenician. He did not resign the heterodox Samaritan to the uncovenanted mercies of God. — BELA B. EDWARDS: *Writings*, vol. i. pp. 455–6.

Since the days of our Lord's personal ministry, his disciples have altered the shibboleth of Christianity. The test-question is not now, "Simon Peter, lovest thou me?" but, "Simon Peter, thinkest thou as I do?" Unless the answer be clearly and decidedly affirmative, there is but cold welcome to the Master's vineyard: no excellence of piety is a sufficient offset to variant opinions, even about things the most abstruse and difficult of determination. No superiority of understanding compensates, in its admirable conclusions, for unlawful speculations upon subjects concerning which men have done little else than speculate from the beginnings of thought. "Venerable Bede," says John Newton, "after giving a high character of some contemporary, adds, 'But, unhappy man, he did not keep Easter our way.'" — DR. T. E. BOND, Jun.: *Methodist Quarterly Review for April*, 1853; 4th series, vol. v. p. 256.

Is it too much to ask such persons [as would abjure the union of Christians on any other terms than those of perfect identity of opinion with themselves] to place themselves in company with their divine Lord, and to follow him through all the scenes of his incarnation, for the purpose of asking from what action, or from what expression, they can feel authorized to treat with hostility, and to reject with scorn, the efforts that are being made to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood between his disciples? Is it from his Sermon upon the Mount, when he poured his benediction upon the peace-makers, and called them the children of God? Is it from his frequent rebukes to his too litigious followers? Is it from his conversation with the woman of Samaria, and his labors on that occasion, among a people hated and shunned by his own kindred? Is it from his inimitable parable of the good Samaritan? Is it from his reproof of the distempered zeal of his disciples, who would have stopped the man that cast out demons, because he followed not them? Is it from his forbearance with his apostles, under their cloudy apprehensions of his doctrine and his will, their impure motives, and their defective sanctity? How wide the interval which separated his religious knowledge and attainments from those of his disciples! — he, the fountain of illumination; they, encompassed with infirmities: but did he recede from them on that account? No: he drew closer the bond of union, imparted successive streams of effulgence, till he incorporated his spirit with theirs, and elevated them into a nearer resemblance of himself. . . . . Is there, notwithstanding our differences, a principle known, — a principle attainable by us all, — a principle which is an integral part of our religion, — a principle which, if it were more cultivated and in full exercise, would subjugate all that is low and selfish and malevolent in our nature; and which, while it filled our own bosom with peace, would give us peace with our fellow-Christians of every name? There is. It is Love, — holy love, — heavenly love, — Christian love. But where is it to be found? In the heart of God, in the bosom of Jesus, in the minds of angels, in the spirits of just men made perfect, and in the pages of the New Testament, we know; but where on earth shall we find it? It ought to be seen in beauty and in vigor in the church of Christ: this is built to be its mansion, and for its residence. But how little is it to be found in this its own and appropriated abode! — JOHN ANGELL JAMES: *Union in relation to the Religious Parties of England; in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 206–7, 217–8.

His [Christ's] most distinct command was to love all mankind; which obligation, on our part, he grounded upon the universal love of the Father in heaven, who makes his sun to shine equally upon all nations, and sends his rain as plentifully upon those who are most benighted or deformed by vice, as upon those who are decorated with the fairest virtues. The neighbor to be loved as one's self was every man without exception; and, by thus representing love to the weakest and most unworthy of mankind, in connection with love to the Almighty Father in heaven, as the substance of all morality, our Lord entirely and for ever abolished all party considerations in respect to distinction of family, rank, nation, and religion. . . . Christ appeared on earth invested with sublime and holy doctrines, which he labored to impart, not to sects and sectaries, but to universal man. — E. L. MAGOON: *Republican Christianity*, pp. 303–5.

By introducing these and other extracts on behalf of a spirit which would embrace within its grasp all sincere Christians of whatever name or belief, and which would not dare appropriate to any one particular sect the possession of all truth and all saving faith, to the entire exclusion of others, — we do not wish to be understood as implying that Trinitarianism is in itself or apart from the doctrines with which it is usually connected, naturally and necessarily productive of an arrogant or illiberal demeanor towards its opponents. All that we mean to indicate is, that, though the unchristian and anticatholic spirit has been too frequently allied with the profession of Trinitarianism, its best friends are united, in heart and purpose, with its greatest foes, in proclaiming Christianity to be a religion of perfect freedom and universal love.

Nor are we so foolish as to imagine, that, by any selection of extracts from the writings of good men, we could *prove* the religion of Jesus to be pre-eminently a religion of love. The nominal disciples of Christ may, indeed, show, in their conversations and their lives, that they have not yet learned the lesson of human brotherhood; and, in justification of their unbelief, the enemies of Christianity may point the finger of scorn at the animosities and strifes of sectarians, and say, "Behold! these are the fruits of your religion." But no one who opens the New Testament can avoid seeing on almost every page, written in characters of light, the glorious doctrine of the fraternity of all God's children. If the reader of the gospel records be blind to this blessed truth, no mere authority and no mode of reasoning will convince him of it. We make the extracts, therefore, not for this purpose, but to exhibit the inconsistencies of Christians so called, and to urge them, by considering the mercies of God, the benign spirit of the Master whom they profess to serve, and their own solemn responsibilities, to give no countenance, by the cherishing and manifestation of uncharitable dispositions, to the inference of the unbeliever, that Christianity cannot be a revelation from heaven.

SECT. II. — TRUE ZEAL ACCOMPANIED BY A SPIRIT OF WISDOM, LOVE, AND HUMILITY; FALSE ZEAL, BY AN IGNORANT, UNCHARITABLE, DOMINEERING, AND PERSECUTING SPIRIT.

Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with dearer love.
SHAKSPEARE.

When we would convince men of any error by the strength of truth, let us withal pour the sweet balm of love upon their heads. Truth and love are two the most powerful things in the world; and, when they both go together, they cannot easily be withstood. The golden beams of truth and the silken cords of love, twisted together, will draw men on with a sweet violence, whether they will or no. Let us take heed we do not sometimes call that zeal for God and his gospel, which is nothing else but our own tempestuous and stormy passion. True zeal is a sweet, heavenly, and gentle flame, which maketh us active for God, but always within the sphere of love. It never calls for fire from heaven to consume those that differ a little from us in their apprehensions. It is like that kind of lightning, which the philosophers speak of, that melts the sword within, but singeth not the scabbard: it strives to save the soul, but hurteth not the body. True zeal is a loving thing, and makes us always active to edification, and not to destruction. . . . True zeal is an *ignis lambens*, a soft and gentle flame, that will not scorch one's hand: it is no predatory or voracious thing. But carnal and fleshly zeal is like the spirit of gunpowder set on fire, that tears and blows up all that stands before it. . . . Let this soft and silken knot of love tie our hearts together; though our heads and apprehensions cannot meet, as indeed they never will, but always stand at some distance off from one another. Our zeal, if it be heavenly, if it be true vestal fire kindled from above, will not delight to tarry here below, burning up straw and stubble and such combustible things, and sending up nothing but gross and earthy fumes to heaven; but it will rise up, and return back pure as it came down, and will be ever striving to carry up men's hearts to God along with it. It will be only occupied about the promoting of those things which are unquestionably good; and, when it moves in the irascible way, it will quarrel with nothing but sin. — DR. RALPH CUDWORTH: *Sermon* I. *appended to the Intellectual System of the Universe*, vol. ii. pp. 574–5

I know those that would draw you into such a contentious zeal will tell you, that their cause is the cause of God, and that you desert him and betray it if you be not zealous in it; and that it is but the counsel of flesh and blood which maketh you pretend moderation and peace and that it is a sign that you are hypocrites, that are so lukewarm, and carnally comply with error; and that the cause of God is to be followed with the greatest zeal and self-denial. And all this is true, if you be but sure that it is indeed the cause of God, and that the greater works of God be not neglected on such pretences, and that your zeal be much greater for faith and charity and unity than for your opinions. But, upon great experience, I must tell you, that, of the zealous contenders in the world that cry up "the cause of God and truth," there is not one of very many, that understandeth what he talks of; but some of them cry up the cause of God, when it is a brat of a proud and ignorant brain, and such as a judicious person would be ashamed of..... Zeal without judgment hath not only entangled souls in many heinous sins, but hath ruined churches and kingdoms; and, under pretence of exceeding others in doing good, it makes men the greatest instruments of evil. There is scarce a sin so great and odious, but ignorant zeal will make men do it as a good work. Christ told his disciples, that those that killed them should think they did God service; and Paul bare record to the murderous, persecuting Jews, "that they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." — RICHARD BAXTER: *Practical Works*, vol. ii. pp. 130–1, 327.

"The temple of the Lord," said the Jews, as we read in Jeremiah, — "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these." In the same spirit do some of our contemporaries exclaim, "The gospel, the gospel, the gospel of Jesus, is here, and here only." Perhaps, my brethren, it were unkind and uncourteous to apply to these misguided declaimers those indignant terms in which Jeremiah speaks of his countrymen, "Trust not in lying words." But I cannot be charged with indecorum or harshness, when I recommend to these accusers of my ecclesiastical brethren a little more charity to their fellow-Christians, and a little more distrust in themselves; and much more discipline from knowledge, as the correction of headstrong zeal and frantic enthusiasm..... The pride which generates impatience of contradiction upon points which have long exercised our intellectual faculties, and which we often conceive to be intrinsically of higher moment, because we had been accustomed to meditate upon them, and to contend for them; the fondness which we insensibly contract

for certain formularies of religious belief, and certain modes of religious ceremonies; the dread which we feel of fickleness and lukewarmness in what we think the cause of Heaven, when it was really the cause of our own prepossessions, our own antipathies, our own credulity, and our own ignorance, — all these circumstances may lead us into measures which a well-directed and well-disciplined conscience would represent to us as injurious to the best interests of society, and adverse to the plainest and soundest principles of virtue and religion. To his own Master, say those principles, let every religionist stand or fall while the Master is not man, but God; and, as to the glory of God, surely his perfections, his moral government, and his revealed will, never will permit us to believe that it is promoted by injury to persons who are the objects of his care as a Creator, a Redeemer, and a Sanctifier. The glory of God, indeed, as we learn from history, has been the avowed justification of the most flagrant enormities. For the glory of God, and the law given by him to Moses, the Jewish rabble, decoyed and goaded by the Jewish priesthood, dragged the blessed Jesus to the cross; inflicted upon the meek and pious Stephen the most barbarous violence; caused an execrable conspiracy of forty zealots to bind themselves by an oath, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had slain Paul; subjected him to a long and comfortless imprisonment at Rome; and brought upon the noble army of primitive martyrs all the miseries of dungeons, chains, tortures, and death. For the glory of God, Mahomet raised the standard, maddened his illiterate and sanguinary followers with the wildest frenzy in the defence of the Divine Unity, and spread around him the most hideous desolation. For the glory of God were undertaken those frantic crusades which for a long time agitated the Christian world, and have left behind them the most frightful traces of superstition, intolerance plunder, and bloodshed. For the glory of God, the bigot, as I told you, whether a Romanist or Protestant, has consigned many a studious, virtuous, and devout Christian to the flames. The glory of God incited Anabaptists and other fanatics to trample upon the authority of laws, and to convulse well-founded and well-administered governments with all the tumults of sedition, and all the atrocities of carnage. Yet the bewildered imagination and infuriate passions of these self-appointed champions for the honor of their Maker, pushed them onward from one outrage to another, not merely without the strong reproach, but with the prompt, lively, and full approbation, of their perverted consciences. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Works*, vol. v. pp. 119 and 472–4.

Men may differ from each other in many religious opinions, and yet all may retain the essentials of Christianity; men may sometimes eagerly dispute, and yet not differ much from one another. The rigorous persecutors of error should therefore enlighten their zeal with knowledge, and temper their orthodoxy with charity; — that charity without which orthodoxy is vain; charity that "thinketh no evil," but "hopeth all things" and "endureth all things." — DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON: *Life of Browne; in Works*, vol. ix. p. 298.

It is greatly to be feared, that religious controversialists are often under the influence of pride, envy, and a contentious disposition, which they and their admirers mistake for the warm glow of a pure zeal. I am led to draw this unfavorable conclusion from the vehemence and acrimony of their language. The love of truth operates indeed, steadily and uniformly, but not violently. It is the love of victory and superiority which sharpens the style. The desire of literary fame, of becoming the patron or leader of a sect, of silencing the voice of opposition, usually inspires that eagerness and warmth of temper which it is not natural that the truth or falsehood of any speculative opinion should excite. — VICESIMUS KNOX: *Sermons; in Works*, vol. vi. p. 249.

Religious charity requires that we should not judge any set of Christians by the representations of their enemies alone, without hearing and reading what they have to say in their own defence..... Some men cannot understand how they are to be zealous, if they are candid, in religious matters. But remember that the Scriptures carefully distinguish between laudable zeal and indiscreet zeal.... The object is to be at the same time pious to God, and charitable to man; to render your own faith as pure and perfect as possible, not only without hatred of those who differ from you, but with a constant recollection, that it is possible, in spite of thought and study, that you may have been mistaken; that other sects may be right; and that a zeal in his service, which God does not want, is a very bad excuse for those bad passions which his sacred word condemns. — SYDNEY SMITH: *Sermon on Christian Charity; in Works*, pp. 308, 310.

We have a well-authenticated statement respecting an orthodox professor of Christianity, who declined to assist a neighbor's family involved in distress, on the ground of the heterodoxy of a member of that family. That tendency in our fallen nature which induces us to place reliance on a doctrinal creed or on a zealous temperament, to the neglect of humane sentiments and of a generous disposition, is the reason why the apostles so earnestly admonish their disciples on

the subject. Nearly allied to this disposition, and perhaps a result of it, is candor in judgment, — a habit of putting a charitable construction upon the motives of our fellow-men; the absence of bigotry and exclusiveness; a resolute determination to judge of books, of systems of knowledge, and of men, with discriminating kindness. No one ought to be considered as eminently pious, who is rash and overbearing in his moral or literary judgments. If his piety does not enter into and control these matters, it is one-sided and partial. . . . These illiberal judgments and uncourteous feelings are intimately connected with a narrow understanding and with confined intellectual opinions. The natural tendency of enlarged views, and of extensive and patient reading, is to break down the barriers of party, and of a selfish bigotry, while it refines and ennobles the soul. — BELA B. EDWARDS: *Writings*, vol. ii. pp. 479–80.

True religion imparts to the mind all those ideas that are fitted most potently to stir the heart of man. . . . It kindles and perpetually feeds that wise zeal which has a grasp, breadth, and elevation, of which mere sectarian selfishness is destitute, because not possessing the self-denying heroism and affection of which true greatness is always formed. . . . Christianity is not merely that indolent good nature which often steals the name of philanthropy, but the supernatural fire that flashed transforming ideas on the brain of Paul as he journeyed to Damascus, and poured still more celestial revelations on his heart; rousing divine yearnings that bigotry had smothered, and unsealing that fountain of charity toward all which theological thorns tend so much to choke, and which partisan bitterness is sure to destroy. — E. L. MAGOON: *Republican Christianity*, pp. 321–2.

A schismatic spirit often insidiously puts on the disguise of commendable zeal for the glory of God. . . . When a vain and weak-minded Christian has been wrought upon either by flatterers or designing teachers or by his own warm distempered imagination, to suppose that he of all others is called upon to seek the glory of God, and punish his foes, he soon devises bold and decisive means for vindicating the supposed honor of God, and finds arguments for his employing the most cruel and unscriptural measures against heretics and blasphemers. . . . It was not a blood-thirsty cruelty that always kindled the fires of the Inquisition, but at times an intense desire to glorify God, by searching out his concealed foes, penetrating the arcana of their heart, and compelling them, by civil pains and penalties, to come back within the pale of the church; otherwise they were to be extirpated as here-

tics, whom it was dangerous for religion to allow to live. The same fiery, schismatical spirit passed, in a mitigated form, from the Roman into the Reformed churches; for they also persecuted, and persecuted from a sincere desire to promote the glory of God. The amiable Bishop Hall wrote a treatise on Moderation, and, with all his tenderness to sectaries, he lets out the symptoms of a deeply-seated schismatical spirit when he says, "Master Calvin did well approve himself to God's church, in bringing Servetus to the stake at Geneva." The good man knew not what spirit he was of. . . . It is an angelic attainment to have burning zeal, and yet zeal burning in love, to compass the whole world, not for proselytes, but for converts, and to respect every sincere inquirer after truth as an honest, conscientious professor. True zeal draws no other sword from its scabbard but the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. — DR. GAVIN STRUTHERS: *Party Spirit; in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 417–19.

When, in the course of our reading, we meet with passages so finely conceived as these, so beautifully exhibiting the divine and gentle spirit of our Lord, and so admirably conducive to the harmony and peace of Christendom, without furnishing any grounds for indifference to the study, reception, and spread of gospel truth; and when we recall to mind the jealousies and the heart-burnings which so-called Christians have cherished within their hearts, and the wars and persecutions which they have waged against each other, on account of mere differences of opinion, — we have sometimes thought that the religious world would lose little of truth, and far less of love, if the creeds and confessions and systems of theology, which have encouraged feelings and acts so alien to all that is good and pure and peaceable, had, without the concurrence of man's embittered passions, been swept by the winds of heaven to the mouth of some great volcano, there to be engulfed, and perish for ever. But we remember our Master's words, and exclaim, in the spirit of his far-seeing counsel, — "Nay! lest, while we gather up the tares, we root up also the wheat with them." Let the follies and errors, and even the fulminations, of theologians remain unconsumed in the monumental piles which they have raised in their codes and books, lest, while they are being burnt, the wisdom, the piety, and the truths, weak and imperfect as they are, which have to some extent been incorporated with their opposites, perish also. Let them remain awhile, — but remain inactive in the production of further evil, till the great field of humanity be covered by the fruits of truth, righteousness, and love, — till the harvest of a liberal Christianity appear, when the tares of error, of bigotry, and of persecution will either have rotten away from the face of the earth, or been consumed by the flames of a catholicism not assumed as a badge of distinction by any one church, but operating as a vital principle in all societies and communities bearing the name of the blessed Jesus.

SECT. III. — NOT UNIFORMITY OF OPINION, BUT PIETY, MUTUAL FORBEARANCE AND AFFECTION, — LOVE TO GOD, CHRIST, AND MAN, — THE BASES OF CHRISTIAN UNION.

> Let them see
> That as more pure and gentle is your faith,
> Yourselves are gentler, purer.
>
> ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Although a difference in opinions, or modes of worship, may prevent an entire external union, yet need it prevent our union in affection? Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? It is certain, so long as we know but in part, that all men will not see all things alike. It is an unavoidable consequence of the present weakness and shortness of the human understanding, that several men will be of several minds in religion as well as in common life. Nay, farther: although every man necessarily believes that every particular opinion which he holds is true, yet can no man be assured, that all his own opinions, taken together, are true. Nay, every thinking man is assured they are not; seeing *Humanum est errare et nescire*, to be ignorant of many things, and to be mistaken in some, is the necessary condition of humanity. Every wise man, therefore, will allow others the same liberty of thinking, which he desires they should allow him; and will no more insist on their embracing his opinions, than he would have them to insist on his embracing theirs. He bears with those who differ from him, and only asks him with whom he desires to unite in love that single question, "Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?" No man can choose for, or prescribe to, another. But every man must follow the dictates of his own conscience, in simplicity and godly sincerity. He must be fully persuaded in his own mind, and then act according to the best light he has. Nor has any creature power to constrain another to walk by his own rule. God has given no right to any of the children of men thus to lord it over the consciences of his brethren; but every man must judge for himself, as every man must give an account of himself to God. I dare not presume to impose my mode of worship on any other. I believe it is truly primitive and apostolical; but my belief is no rule for another. I ask not, therefore, of him with whom I would unite in love, "Are you of my church? — of my congregation? Do you receive the

same form of church government? Do you join in the same form of prayer wherein I worship God?" My only question at present is this, "Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?" Is thy heart right with God? Dost thou believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? Is thy faith filled with the energy of love? Art thou employed in doing "not thy own will, but the will of Him that sent thee"? Is thy heart right towards thy neighbor? Do you show your love by your works? If it be, "give me thine hand." . . . . . A catholic spirit is not an indifference to all opinions, nor an indifference as to public worship, nor an indifference to all congregations. Catholic love is a catholic spirit. But, if we take this word in its strictest sense, a man of a catholic spirit is one who gives his hand to all whose hearts are right with his heart; one who loves his friends as brethren in the Lord, as members of Christ, and children of God; as joint partakers now of the present kingdom of God, and fellow-heirs of his eternal kingdom; all of whatever opinion, or worship, or congregation, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; who love God and man; who, rejoicing to please, and fearing to offend God, are careful to abstain from evil, and are zealous of good works. He is the man of a truly catholic spirit who bears all these continually upon his heart. — Abridged from JOHN WESLEY: ***Works***, vol. i. pp. 347–54.

The preceding extract consists of a few sentences culled from Wesley's Sermon on a "Catholic Spirit," which, though unambitious in its style and objectionable in one or two of its ideas, will perhaps bear comparison with any thing of the kind ever published. Would that this discourse, containing more of the principles of true religion than can be found in many a professed work on divinity, were scattered in every Christian home; read and digested by every man, woman, and child; and exemplified in every thought and word and deed!

Away with names, and the petty distinctions of religious party! Are you a Christian, or wish to be one, in deed, not in word only; for the sake of spiritual, not temporal purposes? Then drop your prejudices, and seek the spirit of Christianity, not in systems, but in the written gospel, assisted by prayer, and the pious illustrations of men sincere and good, however they may have been reviled or neglected through prejudice, political artifice, or mistaken zeal. When you have thus found the truth, show its influence by your charity. Be united to all Christians, as well as to Christ; and beware of making distinctions by nicknames, and thus exciting envy, wrath, and malice, which are of a nature opposite to the fruits of the Spirit, — love, joy,

and peace. Good men should join in a firm phalanx, that the evil may not triumph in their divisions. Let all who are united under the banners of Christ hail one another as brother Christians, though they may differ on the subject of church discipline, rites, ceremonies, or even non-essential doctrine. . . . Let us consider how the hard-hearted, unconverted, depraved, and worthless part of mankind exult, while Christians, agreeing in essentials, quarrel and revile each other, not on the substance of religion, but on the mere shades of difference in opinion in matters of indifference. . . . Are you a sincere believer, — a lover of God and man? I salute you from my heart as my brother in Christ, whether, in consequence of your birth and education, you formed the creed you utter at Rome, at Geneva, or in your closet at home. — VICESIMUS KNOX: *Christian Philosophy; in Works*, vol. vii. pp. 289-90.

A more extensive diffusion of piety among all sects and parties will be the best and only preparation for a cordial union. Christians will then be disposed to appreciate their differences more equitably; to turn their chief attention to points on which they agree; and, in consequence of loving each other more, to make every concession consistent with a good conscience. Instead of wishing to vanquish others, every one will be desirous of being vanquished by the truth. . . . In the room of being repelled by mutual antipathy, they will be insensibly drawn nearer to each other by the ties of mutual attachment. A larger measure of the spirit of Christ would prevent them from converting every incidental variation into an impassable boundary, or from condemning the most innocent and laudable usages for fear of symbolizing with another class of Christians. . . . The general prevalence of piety in different communities would inspire that mutual respect, that heartfelt homage, for the virtues conspicuous in the character of their respective members, which would urge us to ask with astonishment and regret, Why cannot we be one? What is it that obstructs our union? Instead of maintaining the barrier which separates us from each other, and employing ourselves in fortifying the frontiers of hostile communities, we should be anxiously devising the means of narrowing the grounds of dispute, by drawing the attention of all parties to those fundamental and catholic principles in which they concur. — ROBERT HALL: *Review of Zeal without Innovation; in Works*, vol. ii. p. 266.

Truth and virtue we do not hold to be chartered to companies: they are possessed only in part by those who possess the most of them;

and they are possessed in some good measure even by many who must yet stand condemned as capitally wrong in theology. . . . . It is trite to say, that, while the human mind continues what it is, men must differ, not merely in taste and intellectual preferences, but even in some of those matters of belief which should be under the control of mere reason. The supposition of an age of uniformity is therefore chimerical; but the supposition — nay the positive hope — of an age of Christian concord and of cordial combination is not chimerical; for it is identical with the belief of the truth of Christianity itself, and of its triumph in the world. . . . . Ought not those to look well to the course they are pursuing, who, on the plea of a conscientious regard to some special enactment, or of the adherence to some institution which, at the most, is but the means to an end, are, and in a deliberate manner, putting contempt upon Christ's first law, — his universal and sovereign will; and on such ground are either refusing to recognize and to consort with other Christians, or are even denying the very name to those whose only alleged fault is their error, if it be an error, on the particular in question? — ISAAC TAYLOR: *Lectures on Spiritual Christianity*, pp. 159, 162, 179.

Let a man, no matter what his sectarian distinctions and natural or social disadvantages, or what his discrepancies in the minor views and practices of religion, give but evidence of love to Christ and to his word, and holiness, and he is my brother. Be he Arminian or Calvinist, Episcopalian or Congregationalist, — let him be Baptist or Pedobaptist, — let him have all worldly disadvantages of education and station and taste, — be he Greek or Barbarian, bond or free, — if I love Christ, I love that disciple of Christ. . . . Under every variety of costume and dispensation and dialect and race, the tenant of a Caffre kraal or of the Greenlander's snow-hut, — nay, let him mutter this prayer as his Pater Noster in an unknown tongue; if I find, under all his superstition and disguises of hereditary prejudice and error, the love of my Christ and the likeness of my Lord, can I — dare I disavow the brotherhood? — WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS: *Lectures on the Lord's Prayer*, pp. 12, 13.

Intolerance among Christians of reasonable diversities of Christian faith has been one of the greatest errors of modern times, and has brought infinite reproach on the Protestant cause. It greatly impeded the progress of the Reformation at first, and has hindered both its completion and general prevalence since. While pretending the greatest zeal for the honor of God and the purity of religion, it is

itself the greatest corruption. It betrays the cause of God with a kiss, and stabs it to the heart, with professions of love on its lips. It is amazing that the world has been so long in getting its eyes open to the enormous wickedness of this procedure. But a brighter day is breaking, not only with respect to the accuracy and extent of Christian knowledge, but also with respect to a reasonable indulgence of the ignorant, the weak and erring. Uniformity in faith, and equality in superior knowledge and discernment, are very desirable indeed; but Christian charity and mercy are far greater and better. With all the importance of Christianity as an institute of knowledge, it has a transcendently greater importance as an institute of love and general holiness. — LEICESTER A. SAWYER: *Organic Christianity*, p. 413.

The Scripture plan of unity and concord cannot be based on absolute uniformity of opinion and practice. This is the basis on which the church of Rome maintains her pretended unity, — a basis which may perhaps be consistently assumed by a church claiming infallibility, and denying the right of private judgment. It is a basis which may seem to be countenanced by some expressions in Scripture, if we attend to the sound rather than the sense of them. It has often been attempted to be acted on. It was the favorite scheme, the idol, of the framers of the Solemn League and Covenant, about the middle of the sixteenth century; and it is a scheme to which, even in recent times, some excellent persons have clung with fond affection or obstinate pertinacity. . . . The slightest knowledge of the constitution of human nature, and the slightest attention to the history of the human race, may convince us that it is a scheme utterly hopeless and chimerical. . . . On all other subjects on which they think at all, men entertain different opinions. But there is no subject so likely to occasion a variety of sentiment as religion; for, though its fundamental doctrines are comparatively few and abundantly obvious, there is no subject which presents in its subordinate details such a multiplicity of intricate and difficult questions, none that has been so much perplexed by controversy, none more likely to awaken prejudice and passion, and none for the investigation of which the human faculties labor under a stronger indisposition or inaptitude. . . . Even in the purest and happiest ages of the church, the friends of religion have not been entirely of one mind; and, if at times there has been something like an approximation towards complete uniformity, it has probably been when the spirit of free inquiry has been extinguished, when the faculties of the human mind were in a state of utter torpor. . . . What

is the Scripture plan for maintaining the unity of the Saviour's mystical body? To that plan we are already in some measure "shut up," by finding all others to be either unwarrantable or impracticable. Of that plan, the characteristic feature is forbearance; and the essence of it may be expressed in a single sentence. All true Christians ought to walk together in all things in which they are agreed; and as the points on which they differ, though some of them may be very important, cannot be essential to salvation, they ought to make these points matters of forbearance. — DR. ROBERT BALMER: *The Scripture Principles of Unity; in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 35–37.

Notwithstanding these sensible remarks, Dr. Balmer condemns, as "lax and latitudinarian," the principle maintained by John Locke, that all who admit the divine origin of Christianity should be received into the Christian church.

Men have tried all kinds of methods, except the only right, effectual, and divinely appointed one, for gathering into union the broken and scattered fragments of the church, and for tuning to harmony its discordant voices. They have tried the compulsion of law, the power of logic, the persuasion of eloquence, the subscription of articles, the application of tests, the authority of tradition; and yet all these means have signally failed, not only to procure internal unity, but external uniformity. . . . And yet there, upon the very surface of revelation, where every eye can see it, lies, and has lain for nearly eighteen centuries, a principle so simple that a child may understand it, which, if properly felt and judiciously applied, would have effected that which has ever been considered so necessary, and yet so difficult, — "FORBEARING ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE." Divinely inspired, heaven-descended, godlike sentence! How simple, yet how sublime! . . . If there be one practical precept which we could wish to be printed in starry characters on the dark page of the nightly sky, written in sunbeams on the tablet of the earth, and uttered both night and day in voices from the heavens, that the attention of men might be irresistibly turned to it, and their hearts unavoidably impressed by it, this is the injunction; and yet what greater clearness, or more importance, or higher authority, would this splendid method of publication give to it, beyond what it already possesses as a portion of Holy Writ? "FORBEARING ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE." This one short precept, universally obeyed, would set all right, and reduce all to order. It would not at once reconcile all minds, but it would harmonize all

hearts. It would not amalgamate all churches into an external uniformity; but it would combine them all in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace. It might not hush the voice of controversy; but it would take from it the harsh dissonance of human passion, and cause it to speak in the mellifluous tones of divine charity. — JOHN ANGELL JAMES: *Union in relation to the Religious Parties of England; in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 218–19.

Toleration! I hate the word. It implies a power or a right which nowhere has existence; and the man who tolerates, under the imagination that he possesses any such right, is only second in presumption to him who uses the imaginary right in actual intolerance and persecution. No man has the right either to tolerate or not to tolerate another, in aught whatever which he may conscientiously think or say or do in regard to what lies between him and his God, — his religion. . . . . You are perfectly conscious, you tell me, that you are sincere and upright in your desire to know the mind of Christ, and in your inquiries after it; and therefore you must regard the conclusions to which another has come that are different from yours, as arising from the biasing influence of some predisposition against the truth. Well: suppose the other declares himself to have the very same consciousness of integrity, must not he think the same of the conclusions to which you have come? Suppose it admitted that there can be no such thing as perfectly innocent error. Is it safe — nay, is it consistent with the self-diffidence and humility of the Christian character — to assume our own infallibility; not our own exclusive conscientiousness merely, but the absolute impossibility of the error lying with us; as if we, of all Christians on earth, were altogether beyond the reach of any perverting or biasing influence? Do not becoming distrust of ourselves, and becoming charity for others, unite in recommending a different principle on which to regulate our feelings and our conduct towards our fellow-Christians? Is there no allowance to be made for the varieties, great as they are, even in mental perspicacity and vigor, and none for the power of early habits and associations, where the sincerity of the desire to know and to follow the mind of Christ may be equal? . . . This is the evil, — your forgetting that you hold no position towards others which they have not the same title to assume towards you. If, indeed, perfect unanimity is to be assumed as the only admissible basis of Christian communion, "where are the two individuals to be found, who, if they continued to exercise freedom of thought, and, in doing so, did not take special care to tie their tongues,

and keep their thoughts to themselves, could long maintain consistent fellowship?" .... When we see a fellow-Christian in earnest in his inquiries after his Master's will, — searching the Scriptures, seeking divine direction, discovering an evident desire to know what is right, and to the extent of his knowledge faithfully doing it, — we are then warranted, nay, more than warranted, we are bound to conclude, that the same conscientiousness has also, and equally, been in exercise in regard to those points on which he has arrived at different conclusions from our own. We may marvel at those conclusions, — marvel greatly at his not seeing what to us appears so clear. But we must not forget that his right to wonder is the same as ours. The effect on both sides ought to be, instead of proud and indignant despite of each other's judgments, the exercise of self-diffident humble-mindedness, and the cultivation of reciprocal charity. — DR. RALPH WARDLAW: *A Catholic Spirit; in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 316, 332–5.

It is painful to think, that, amid sentiments breathing so just and divine a spirit, and so happily fitted to promote good-will and union among all who acknowledge one and the same Lord and Master, this celebrated writer should have felt obliged, by his views of Christian doctrine, to say, p. 317, that "from the pale of the Christianity within which the spirit of catholic love is to be cherished, those must, of necessity, be excluded who hold and avow the principles of Socinianism;" that is, such persons as are improperly called by this name, namely, believers in one only God the Father, and in his Son and Servant, the man Christ Jesus. The Essay from which we have taken the above extract is one of eight, severally penned by CHALMERS, BALMER, CANDLISH, JOHN ANGELL JAMES, DAVID KING, WARDLAW, STRUTHERS, and SYMINGTON, — divines all more or less noted both in their own land and in the United States. These Essays, written in 1844 at the suggestion of a friend to Christian union, abound in good common sense, united with an earnest piety, and a feeling of intense desire for the prevalence of kinder dispositions and more liberal modes of operation than at present exist in "evangelical" or orthodox churches; but we regret to say, that the charity which they exhibit, catholic as it assumes to be, is so narrow as to exclude those "worshippers of the Father," through the mediation of the Son and the influences of the Spirit, in whose society have been enrolled the names of Carpenter and Channing, of Ware and of Norton, — gifted and good men, who, if they were not acknowledged on earth as co-workers with a Chalmers, a Balmer, and a Wardlaw in the same great cause, — that of a common Christianity, — are, we trust, recognized in heaven by them as fellow-saints and fellow-disciples, now that they have each left the scene of their earthly labors, and gone to another and a holier sphere of God's universe, where the differences that separated them here from each other are probably all unknown.

SECT. IV. — THE DUTY OF HOLDING INTERCOURSE AND COMMUNION WITH CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS, AND OF LOVING ALL MANKIND.

> Oh, might we all our lineage prove,
> Give and forgive, do good and love,
> By soft endearments in kind strife
> Lightening the load of daily life!
>
> KEBLE.

Let church union and communion be laid upon none but catholic terms, which are possible and fit for all to be agreed in. Common reason will tell any impartial man, that there can be no more effectual engine to divide the churches, and raise contentions and persecutions, than to make laws for church communion, requiring such conditions as it is certain the members cannot consent to.... If ever the churches agree, and Christians be reconciled, it must be by leaving out all dividing impositions, and requiring nothing as necessary to communion, which all may not rationally be expected to consent in. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Practical Works*, vol. vi. pp. 186–7.

BAXTER did not regard differences of opinion on various doctrinal questions, or respecting church government, of much importance, while he could regard the parties as real Christians, and disposed to live in peace with others. To these two points he considered all other things subordinate. Christian fellowship, with him, was not the fellowship of Calvinists or Arminians, of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, or Baptists: it was the fellowship of Christians, holding the one faith and hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, in unity of spirit, and righteousness of life. This is the only catholic communion which is worth contending for; and which, it cannot be doubted, will, in due time, absorb all other party distinctions and disputes..... His [BAXTER'S] catholic principle of fellowship with all genuine Christians is better understood than it was; though even yet, alas! but partially adopted as a principle, and still more imperfectly exemplified in practice. It implies not indifference to truth, but devoted attachment to it. It involves union without compromise, and co-operation without sacrifice of consistency. It recognizes the exclusive claims of divine authority in religion, and the unquestionable rights of conscience; securing for each individual the power of acting according to his own convictions, while it requires him to concede no less to others. It will ultimately effect what acts of uniformity have hitherto failed to

produce, and which will never be brought about either by compulsory measures of state, or stormy controversies in the church. A greater portion of the spirit of Christ, and a brighter manifestation of his holy image, will do more to unite all his disciples, than the most perfect theory of church government that has yet been recommended, or forced on the world. When this blessed period of love and union shall arrive, the services of BAXTER, as the indefatigable advocate of catholic communion, will not be forgotten. — WILLIAM ORME, *in his edition of Baxter's Practical Works*, vol. i. pp. 584, 613.

The preceding abstract of Richard Baxter's sentiments on Christian liberty and communion is supported by innumerable passages in the writings of that noble-minded Puritan. In p. 574 of the same volume, ORME, who seems to have caught the true spirit of his hero, makes on this subject other observations, which are deserving of perusal.

I have always found, that, when men of sense and virtue mingle in free conversation, the harsh and confused suspicions which they may have entertained of each other gradually give way to more just and more candid sentiments. In reality, the example of many great and good men averts every imputation of impropriety from such intercourse; and the information which I have myself occasionally gained by conversing with learned teachers of many different sects will always make me remember with satisfaction, and acknowledge with thankfulness, the favor which they have done to me by their unreserved and judicious communications.... In truth, men of improved understandings and rooted virtue do not suffer difference of opinion to give them unfavorable impressions of each other..... Will the reviewer suspect me of any predilection for infidelity and disloyalty,... because in the exoteric and esoteric doctrines of the English church I have met with no rule by which I am pledged to entertain any hatred whatsoever to Dissenters, whether Protestant or Catholic; because, "as much as lieth in me, I would live," and exhort others to live, "peaceably with" the Lutheran, Greek, Roman, and Genevan churches, and all other Christian societies; or, finally, because with the light of natural religion, and in the spirit of revealed, I think it my duty to be "kindly affectioned towards all Jews, Turks, infidels," schismatics, "and heretics," as belonging to "one" great "fold under" the care of "one" good "Shepherd"? How does the sacred and indispensable duty of doing good, especially unto those of the household of "faith," absolve me from the obligation to do good, if it be possible, to all other men? Are they not endowed, like myself, with rational

faculties, capable of physical happiness and social union; and placed, or at least believed by me to be placed, in a state of discipline, as subjects of reward or punishment in a life to come? Why, then, should I "judge them," or "set them at nought;" or, by my intolerance, "throw stumbling-blocks in their way" to the adoption of that religion which I have embraced as true? — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Works*, vol. iii. pp. 275–6; and vol. iv. pp. 509–19.

The practice of incorporating private opinions and human inventions with the constitution of a church, and with the terms of communion, has long appeared to him [the writer] untenable in its principle, and pernicious in its effects. There is no position in the whole compass of theology, of the truth of which he feels a stronger persuasion, than that no man or set of men are entitled to prescribe, as an indispensable condition of communion, what the New Testament has not enjoined as a condition of salvation. . . . . It [the Lord's Supper] is appointed to be a memorial of the greatest instance of love that was ever exhibited, as well as the principal pledge of Christian fraternity. It must appear surprising that the rite which of all others is most adapted to cement mutual attachment, and which is in a great measure appointed for that purpose, should be fixed upon as the line of demarcation, the impassable barrier, to separate and disjoin the followers of Christ. . . . According to this notion of it, it is no longer a symbol of our common Christianity: it is the badge and criterion of a party, a mark of discrimination applied to distinguish the nicer shades of difference among Christians. — ROBERT HALL: *Preface and Introductory Remarks to Terms of Communion; in Works*, vol. i. pp. 285, 291.

What I, above all other things, wish to see is a close union between Christian reformers and those who are often, as I think, falsely charged with being enemies of Christianity. It is a part of the perfection of the gospel, that it is attractive to all those who love truth and goodness, as soon as it is known in its true nature, whilst it tends to clear away those erroneous views and evil passions with which philanthropy and philosophy, so long as they stand aloof from it, are ever in some degree corrupted. My feeling towards men whom I believe to be sincere lovers of truth and the happiness of their fellow-creatures, while they seek these ends otherwise than through the medium of the gospel, is rather that they are not far from the kingdom of God, and might be brought into it altogether, than that they are enemies whose views are directly opposed to our own. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Letter* 26; *in Life and Correspondence*, pp. 72–3.

It was a sad defect of the Reformation, and a disastrous error of the reformers, that, with all their sublime conceptions of Christian liberty, as they maintained it against Papal intolerance and oppression, they did not understand the wide extent to which it ought to be maintained against themselves and against one another. Having abolished the despotism of the Papacy, they did not clearly see that the church only wanted the lordship of Christ. They thought they must settle terms of communion, and rules of faith, which Christ and the apostles had not settled. The great law of church fellowship and communion is contained in Rom. xiv. 1, "Him that is weak in the faith receive, but not to doubtful disputations." Christ received all that came. We hear of no applicants for church privileges being rejected by the apostles. . . . The gospel is an institute of faith and knowledge, but it is still more an institute of love and holiness. . . . With an open Bible in hand, and the laws of love and liberty on our lips, and the rights and obligations of independent private judgment on the forefront of all our religious movements, how can we set up bars and gates to shut out of our own particular enclosures of the church of Christ, the weak and ignorant, and erring in faith, whom, nevertheless, God accepts, and with whom the Holy Spirit deigns to dwell? How can we be guilty of such arrogance and inconsistency? How can we allow ourselves thus to sin against our weak brethren, and put stumbling-blocks both in their way and in the way of sinners? How can we so belie our professions, and dishonor our Master, whose living and dying charge it was, that we should love one another as he loved us; and whose prayer it was, in the immediate view of his crucifixion, that we may all be one, even as he and the Father are one; that we may be one in them? John xvii. 21. . . . . When Unitarianism arose, it was made a question, both in Europe and America, whether it should be tolerated as an allowable diversity of opinion, or expose its subjects to separation and excommunication. The subject of the precise character and relations of Christ had been long debated in the ancient church, and had been the occasion of sanguinary wars and persecutions. . . . Under these circumstances, it is not strange that it was a matter of regret with many, that the controversy concerning the character of Christ should be revived in modern times, and that there was a general disposition to prohibit dissent on this subject in most Protestant churches. . . . The Presbyterian churches in England, Switzerland, and France, adopted the same principle of toleration as the church of England; and Unitarianism gained the ascendancy among

them. The Presbyterian churches of the United States adopted the opposite prohibition policy. The Congregational churches of New England were at first tolerant of Unitarian views, till, considerable defections having occurred, the subject came up, in 1816, for general discussion, when this toleration was abandoned, and the opposite policy adopted. This was a revolution in the policy of Congregationalism, against which many protested at the time, and concerning which some are doubtful still. Since this time, the Supreme Divinity of Christ has not only been generally held by Congregationalists, as it is by church of Englandists and Episcopalians, but has been insisted upon as necessary to membership in the church. The correctness of this, either in respect to principle or policy, admits of being seriously questioned. — LEICESTER A. SAWYER: *Organic Christianity*, pp. 405–8.

This testimony on behalf of the most enlarged views of Christian communion is extremely valuable and instructive; proceeding, as it does, from the pen of one who regards "the denial of the Divinity of Christ," his essential Divinity, as "undoubtedly a great error;" and on whom therefore cannot rest any suspicion of his being favorable to Unitarianism. Though assured that "the toleration of error seldom prejudices the truth," he acknowledges, as an honest man and a candid historian, that, by admitting the principle of toleration, the English, Swiss, and French Presbyterian churches became, on the whole, Unitarian; and that, by adopting an opposite policy, — that of exclusion from the membership of their church, — the Congregationalists have, in general, remained Trinitarian; — admissions which seem to imply that the tendency of religious freedom and Christian charity, modelled on the usages and the spirit of apostolic times, is to produce a state of things leading to the reception of Unitarian doctrine.

Schismatics, stickling for church purity, and laying down laws to promote it, which have not been laid down by Christ, have, like others who have pretended to be wiser than God, done grievous injury to the purity of church communion. They have, unwittingly, laid a snare for their own deception. In prescribing terms of communion which are not to be found in the Bible, they have flattered their own vanity, and are in the greatest danger of preferring their own sectarian features to the broad outlines of Christian character laid down in the word of God. Party men are in the utmost jeopardy of extending a culpable degree of charity to party men. Chiming in with their peculiarities is apt to cover a multitude of sins. Hence it is, that a strict-communion church has the gross inconsistency connected with it of having excluded from its pale the most excellent ones of the earth, whilst it has taken in those of its own denomination, who, in a spirit

of candor, are little better than Samaritans. Truly, the practice is revolting, which is followed in many sectarian churches, of excommunicating, at every dispensation of the Lord's Supper, every Christian save those of their own section. Men such as Leighton and Owen and Fuller are cast out without any compunction, because they agree not with them in church order or government; and yet party men, of very suspicious character, find admission. Alas! sectarianism too often takes the bad, and casts the good away. It fills the Lord's table with nominal Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, or Covenanters, rather than with real Christians, bearing all these designations. Were Christ on earth, would he not say to all such churches, "By what authority did you refuse to hold communion with my servants? and who gave you that authority?" — DR. GAVIN STRUTHERS: *Party Spirit; in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 423–4.

Wherever the catholic spirit exists in its genuine character and legitimate amplitude and strength, it will display itself in admitting and courting the society of fellow-believers, without distinction of outward denomination; the intercourse of personal companionship and friendship, and fireside association, along with the exercises of Christian converse and social communion with God; and the intercourse, too, still private, though somewhat more enlarged, of those spiritual coteries, to which our forefathers gave the appropriate designation of fellowship-meetings. It will display itself still further in combination for purposes of Christian benevolence, and in co-operation for promoting their accomplishment, in every accessible way that does not trench upon conscientiousness, or demand any sacrifice of principle. And can any satisfactory reason be assigned why it should not display itself in the more extended "communion of saints," as exemplified in the more public ordinances of divine appointment and Christian celebration; and, above all, in the simple but delightful feast of love, — the Lord's Supper? In what capacity is it that we take our places there? Is it as fellow-presbyterians, or fellow-congregationalists, or fellow-baptists, or fellow-pedobaptists? Is it not rather as fellow-believers, fellow-disciples, fellow-christians? If a Presbyterian and a Congregationalist, or a Baptist and a Pedobaptist, object to sitting down with each other at the table of the Lord, one of two inferences must follow: either they must, on account of their difference of sentiment as to the government or rites of the church, question each other's Christianity; or it must be, not as believers, disciples, Christians, but as Presbyterians or Congregationalists, Baptists or

Pedobaptists, that they respectively consider themselves as entitled to a seat at the feast. And is there any one bearing the name of Jesus, now to be found, who holds and will defend so antiscriptural and narrow-minded a position? Let it be remembered, reader, it is not *our* table, — it is the Lord's table; and shall we, then, consider ourselves as entitled to shut the door of admission to it against any whom, there is every reason to believe, the divine Master of the feast would himself receive? Is there no presumption in this? It is not a Presbyterian table, or an Independent table: it is a Christian table. And ought not all, then, who are "of one heart and one soul" in regard to the essential articles of evangelical truth, and who give evidence of their attachment to these blessed truths by "a conversation as it becometh the gospel of Christ," to welcome one another to a joint participation of the symbols of the same broken body and the same shed blood, which are the objects of their common faith, the ground of their common hope, the charter of their common freedom, and the spring of their common holiness and their common joy? . . . If I see a fellow-believer who happens to be a Presbyterian manifesting in his life a larger amount of the exalted moral excellences and the lovely beauties of the Christian character than another fellow-believer who is an Independent, I must, if my sentiments and feelings are in any thing like harmony with the dictates of the word of God, experience a correspondingly larger amount of the love of complacency towards the one than towards the other. The character must stand higher in my estimation, and lie closer to my heart. And of what kind, then, must that principle be, — how am I to characterize, how am I to designate it, — according to which I am to be precluded from giving a place beside me at the Christian feast to the more worthy, while I am bound to give it to the less worthy, of my brotherly affection? — bound to receive him who is less a Christian because he is an Independent, and bound to exclude him who is more a Christian because he is a Presbyterian! — DR. RALPH WARDLAW: *A Catholic Spirit; in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 338–40.

Of a character similar to those quoted from Drs. Wardlaw and Struthers are the sentiments of Dr. BALMER on the same subject, and in the same work, pp. 52–76; but, excellent as they are alike in spirit and in style, they would occupy too much room if inserted here, and a short extract would not do them justice.

Few Trinitarians of the present day imagine that the Twelve who accompanied Jesus during his ministry on earth, — who walked and drank

and ate with him, — who heard him utter his message of mercy in the name of his God and Father, and address the same great Being in the language of praise and supplication, — and who, though they loved and revered him with the simplicity and tenderness of little children, sometimes forgot their own inferiority; some of them speaking to him in terms of familiarity, some rebuking him, others contending in his presence for earthly power, one of them denying and another betraying him, and all at last forsaking him; — few Trinitarians, we say, are now disposed to think that the apostles, who never, during the time of their personal intercourse with their Lord, had any conception of the spiritual nature of his office, had, or could have, the faintest idea of his being the unchangeable and ever-blessed God. To these men, however, who, like the Unitarians of modern times, believed, not that their Master was Almighty God, but merely his great Messenger and Anointed One, but whose views of his kingdom were confessedly much inferior to theirs, did Jesus address the words, "By this shall all men know that ye" — who fully believe in my divine mission — "are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

To this fact, and to the just inference to be drawn from Christ's beautiful and comprehensive precept, some of the good men* from whom we have quoted do not seem to have adverted. With much kindness and liberality of feeling, but with a proper indignation against the conduct of such sectaries as would debar from Christian communion persons of a high moral and religious character, because, though adopting their general conceptions of the Trinity and the Atonement, they differ from them as to church government and forms, these writers stop short in the application of their great principle, and unhesitatingly refuse to hold communion with a "Socinian" or Unitarian daughter of Christ's church, who — though, like her reputedly orthodox sisters, she may have failed to do all that might have been justly expected — has yet been in some degree distinguished for her works of love and benevolence, for her devotion to the principles of religious freedom, and for her defences of our common Christianity against the attacks of unbelievers; and who, while she claims for her own the philanthropic Firmin, the noble-minded Milton, the godlike Newton, the pious Lardner, and the frank and fearless Priestley, would associate their names, not merely with a section of the church, but with the church itself and with general humanity, and would, in a spirit of catholic love, invite to her communion, without one question as to the peculiarities of their creed, all who profess, and desire to practise, the religion of the once-despised but now-exalted Christ.

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* Even the truly excellent and high-minded BAXTER says that a "church fallen to Arianism is unmeet for Christian communion and to be owned as a church of Christ;" and that, when the Arian or Socinian "venteth his heresy, he may be by the magistrate punished for his crime, and by the churches be branded as none of their communion." (See Practical Works, vol. v. pp. 443–4; and vol. xv. p. 442.) But living, as Baxter did, in an age of rampant bigotry, it is not surprising that he could not wholly escape from the deleterious influences of sectarianism.

SECT. V. — THE NATURE AND EVILS OF AN INTOLERANT OR A PERSECUTING SPIRIT.

> I always thought
> It was both impious and unnatural
> That such immanity and bloody strife
> Should reign among professors of one faith.
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

How much is the face of religion altered from what it was in the days of the apostles! The ancient simplicity of doctrine is turned into abundance of new or private opinions, introduced as necessary articles of religion; and, alas! how many of them false! So that Christians, being too proud to accept of the ancient test of Christianity, cannot now agree among themselves what a Christian is, and who is to be esteemed a Christian; and so they deny one another to be Christians, and destroy their charity to each other, and divide the church, and make themselves a scorn, by their divisions, to the infidel world. . . . . Take heed of engaging yourselves in a sect or faction. For, when once you depart from catholic charity, there groweth up, instead of it, a partial respect to the interest of that sect to which you join; and you will think that whatsoever doth promote that sect doth promote Christianity, and whatever is against that sect is against the church or cause of God. A narrow, sectarian, separating mind will make all the truths of God give place to the opinions of his party; and will measure the prosperity of the gospel in the world by the prosperity of his party, as if he had forgot that there are any more men on the face of the earth, or thought God regarded none but them. He will not stick to persecute all the rest of the church of Christ, if the interest of his sect require it. When once men incorporate themselves into a party, it possesseth them with another spirit, even with a strange uncharitableness, injustice, cruelty, and partiality. What hath the Christian world suffered by one sect's persecuting another, and faction rising up in fury to maintain its own interest, as if it had been to maintain the being of all religion! — RICHARD BAXTER: *Christian Directory; in Practical Works*, vol. ii. pp. 159–60; and vol. vi. p. 184.

Party spirit is a disposition that cannot be easily defined, and it would be difficult to include in a definition of it even its genus and species. It is a monstrous composition of all bad genuses and of all bad species. It is a hydra that reproduces while it seems to destroy itself, and which, when one head hath been cut off, instantly produces

a thousand more. Sometimes it is superstition, which inclines us to deify certain idols, and, after having formed, to prostrate first before them. Sometimes it is ignorance, which prevents our perceiving the importance of some revealed truths, or the dreadful consequences of some prejudices that we had embraced in childhood. Sometimes it is arrogance, which rashly maintains whatever it has once advanced, — advanced perhaps inconsiderately, but which will afterwards be resolutely defended till death, for no other reason but because it has been once asserted, and because it is too mortifying to yield, and say, "I am wrong; I was mistaken." Sometimes it is a spirit of malice and barbarity, which abhors, exclaims against, persecutes, and would even exterminate, all who dare contradict its oracular propositions. Oftener still, it is the union of all these vices together. A party spirit is that disposition which envenoms so many hearts, separates so many families, divides so many societies; which has produced so many excommunications, thundered out so many anathemas, drawn up so many canons, assembled so many councils, and has been so often on the point of subverting the great work of the Reformation, the noblest opposition that was ever formed against it. — JAMES SAURIN: *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 44, New York edition of 1844.

In a Sermon on the Sovereignty of Christ (vol. i. p. 247), this French Protestant makes a heart-stirring and eloquent appeal against the spirit of bigotry which was in his day so rampant in the Reformed Church; but it is too long for insertion here. It would have been gratifying, had this eminent divine carried out his principles of toleration and communion, so as to include all professing Christians.

Though, by coercion, crimes, which are outward and overt acts, may effectually be restrained, it is not by coercion that those inward effects can be produced, — conviction in the understanding, or conversion in the heart. Now, these in religion are all in all. By racks and gibbets, fire and fagot, we may as rationally propose to mend the sight of a man who squints or is purblind, as by these means to enlighten the infidel's or the heretic's understanding, confute his errors, and bring him to the belief of what he disbelieved before. That by such methods he may be constrained to profess what he disbelieves still, nobody can deny, or even doubt. But to extort a hypocritical profession is so far from being to promote the cause of God and religion, that nothing, by the acknowledgment of men of all parties, can stand more directly in opposition to it. — DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL: *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, Lect. 25.

The animosity and uncharitableness which have evermore prevailed among the different denominations of Christians is another cause of the growing infidelity of the present age. It is not said now, as in the days of old, "See how these Christians love one another!" but "See how these Christians hate one another!" Catholics damn Protestants, and Protestants revile Catholics. One sect of Protestants anathematizes another sect; every one holding forth the peculiar doctrines of their own party as the truths of God, in opposition to the peculiar doctrines of those who differ from them. . . . Instead of turning our zeal against the immoralities of the age, we have frequently turned it against men who, in every moral and religious point of view, were perhaps better than ourselves. A spirit of infallibility, in a greater or less degree, pervades all parties. In this unchristian strife, the pure spirit of the gospel has been banished from the great body of professors, and has taken up its abode among a few solitary individuals, dispersed through the several churches of Christendom. Men of discerning spirit, seeing this to be the state of things through all denominations, are led to suppose that there is no truth among any of them. The fact, however, is directly the contrary. They have all gotten the saving truth, if they would hold it but in piety, charity, and righteousness. They all believe in the Saviour of the world. Let them only observe the moral and religious precepts of his gospel, and I do not see what more is necessary to entitle them to our Christian regards. They may not come up to the full orthodox belief of the gospel; but they are such characters as our Saviour himself would not have treated with severity. And, until religion is reduced to the simple form in which he left it, there will never be an end to the bickerings and uncharitableness of party, and infidelity will of course prevail. — DAVID SIMPSON: *Plea for Religion*, pp. 111–15.

Intolerance, under all its various modifications from insult to persecution, from the clamors of bigots and the anathemas of councils to the dungeons and the chains and the racks and the flames employed by the inquisitors for the glory of God, are the produce of spiritual pride. . . . . Alas! I am sufficiently versed in the history of churches, and the controversies of churchmen, to know with certainty, and to lament with sincerity, the "rabid and unrelenting" spirit which frequently, I do not say exclusively, distinguishes the *odium theologicum*. In the very act of defending that religion which forbids us to "judge lest we be judged," those disputants have been too prone to censure persons, instead of examining things, — prone to confound particular

opinions with general principles, — prone to load their adversaries with invidious consequences which those adversaries did not foresee or which, being told of them, they did not admit; or which, admitting them, they would not consider as evidences against their views of facts and principles, — prone to assign criminal motives as the causes of erroneous tenets, — prone to let loose indiscriminate reproaches on the dauntless inquirer and the shameless scorner, — prone to infer deistical propensities for heresy real or supposed, and to insinuate that professed deism is employed as a cloak for lurking atheism. Heaven forbid that I, or my friends, or my enemies, should have "so learned Christ"! — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Works*, vol. vi. p. 383; and vol. iv. pp. 539–40.

I have read books professing to recommend the benign religion of Christ, and to refute all objections to it, yet written in the very gall of bitterness, and displaying a pride and malignity of heart which may justly prompt the unbeliever to say, "If your religion, of which you profess to be a believer, and which you describe as teaching charity or benevolence in its fullest extent, can produce no better specimen than your own temper and disposition, let me preserve my good nature, and you may keep your Christianity, with all its boasted advantages, in your own exclusive possession." The late Bishop Warburton treated infidels with a haughty asperity scarcely proper to be shown to thieves and murderers, or any the most abandoned members of society.... Certain it is, that the spirit which he shows towards his opponents is not the spirit of grace; that spirit which is loving, gentle, and easy to be entreated.... Voltaire and Rousseau would have loved Christianity, and probably believed it, if it had not been distorted and disfigured by the malignant passions of angry defenders of it, who showed their love of Christ by hating their brother, and who appeared by their actions to mean little by their professions, besides the gratification of pride and avarice..... Warburtonian insolence and ill-nature have done more injury to the church, and to the cause of Christianity, than any of the writers whom they were intended to gall and mortify. — VICESIMUS KNOX: *Christian Philosophy; in Works*, vol. vii. pp. 205–6, 208.

In the spirit of the foregoing paragraph, we would express our conviction, that one of the greatest injuries done to the cause of Christianity arises from the effort which apologists sometimes make on its behalf, by overstating the results of doubt and unbelief, and vilifying the characters of sceptics and infidels; instead of offering a calm but earnest and masterly exposition of its principles and evidences. We are far from thinking, that the state of

mind leading to a rejection of the gospel is favorable to the growth of the spiritual affections, to the building-up of a truly disinterested character, or to the possession of the best and most cheering conceptions of God's will and man's destiny; and we would agree with the strongest partisan in condemning that unhallowed will which mocks at whatever is pure or elevating in thought, or which tries to sap the foundations of faith in the unseen and eternal. But we dare not dive into the hearts of our unbelieving brethren, and say that in each and every case the blindness of men to the divinity of Christ's mission must necessarily have proceeded from base hearts and unholy lives. On the contrary, we hope and trust, that, though they may not exhibit those high models of perfection which are attainable by the lowliest disciples of Christ, there are some liable to scepticism more from an obliquity of their understandings than from a perversion of their hearts; who, without being able to own the name of the great Master, to address the Creator as their Father, or to hold unquestioning faith in a heaven beyond the tomb, have yet received a portion of the spirit of Jesus, have longings after a good God "if haply they might find him," with aspirations for immortality, and kind thoughts and good deeds for their brethren of mankind. And we hope and trust, that, when the Son of man shall sit upon his throne of judgment, and reject those who called him "Lord," but who did not what he commanded them, he will say to the honest and devout sceptic, "Come, thou child of doubt and error; come, thou blessed of my Father, who hath pitied thy involuntary wanderings and thy gropings after truth and goodness; come to me; for, though thou never didst own me personally, I accept what thou didst unto my brethren as done unto myself; — come to one of my Father's mansions, and be a child of God."

How much is it to be lamented, that the Christian world should be so violently agitated by disputes, and divided into factions, on points which, it is allowed, in whatever way they are decided, do not enter into the essentials of Christianity! When will the time arrive when the disciples of Christ shall cordially join hand and heart with all who "hold the Head," and no other terms of communion be insisted upon in any church but what are necessary to constitute a real Christian! The departure from a principle so directly resulting from the genius of Christianity, and so evidently inculcated and implied in the Sacred Scriptures, has, in my apprehension, been productive of infinite mischief; nor is there room to anticipate the period of the universal diffusion and triumph of the Christian religion, but in consequence of its being completely renounced and abandoned. What can be more repugnant to the beautiful idea which our Saviour gives us of his church, as one fold under one Shepherd, than the present aspect of Christendom, split into separate and hostile communions frowning defiance on each other, where each erects itself upon party principles,

and selects its respective watchword of contention, as though the epithet of "militant," when applied to the church, were designed to announce, not a state of conflict with the powers of darkness, but of irreconcilable intestine warfare and opposition! — ROBERT HALL: *Preface to Discourse on* 2 Cor. iv. 1; *in Works*, vol. i. pp. 131–2.

It has always seemed to me, that an extreme fondness for our "dear mother the panther" is a snare, to which the noblest minds are most subject. It seems to me, that all, absolutely all, of our religious affections and veneration should go to Christ himself; and that Protestantism, Catholicism, and every other name, which expresses Christianity, and some *differentia* or *proprium* besides, is so far an evil, and, when made an object of attachment, leads to superstition and error. . . . . I groan over the divisions of the church, of all our evils I think the greatest, — of Christ's church I mean; that men should call themselves Roman Catholics, Church of England men, Baptists, Quakers, all sorts of various appellations; forgetting that only glorious name of Christian which is common to all, and a true bond of union. I begin to think that things must be worse before they are better, and that nothing but some great pressure from without will make Christians cast away their idols of sectarianism; the worst and most mischievous by which Christ's church has ever been plagued. — THOS. ARNOLD: *Let.* 73, 92; *Life and Correspondence*, pp. 223, 238.

We have quoted these passages of Dr. ARNOLD, because they express the noble and catholic sentiment, that it is the duty of Christians to be more firmly attached to the principles which are common to all forms or modifications of Christianity than to the differences by which they are distinguished from one another. But we do not altogether agree with the excellent writer in condemning the use of names, when these are employed only for the purpose of indicating the various shades and peculiarities of religious faith. So long as the human mind is diversified, as to its powers and capacities, in different individuals, by the circumstances of birth, culture, association, and example, so long will there be a difference in the conceptions of men respecting some of the doctrines of which Christianity consists, the relations of these doctrines to each other, and their comparative importance, with the requisite modes of expressing them; and, as it is highly improbable that all minds will ever be cast in one unvarying mould, or that society will be so reconstructed and so monotonized as to produce a precise uniformity of tastes and opinions on any subject of engrossing interest, therefore will it ever be found convenient and necessary for the purposes of religious intercourse, if not for the interests of truth, to mark the various differences in theologic belief by the use of terms more specific than that of "Christian." The great fault lies not in employing appellations to distinguish one branch

of Christ's church from another, but in choosing such as are derived from the names of distinguished men, as if parties regarded themselves rather as the followers of Arius or Athanasius, of Luther or Calvin, of Socinus, Wesley, and others, than as the common disciples of one great Master, — the members of only one rightful Head, Jesus Christ. Another fault, not less pernicious in its operation and results, is the associating with sectarian appellations, ideas of moral, not intellectual, differences; the regarding some of them as significant of all that is divine, and others of all that is demoniac; the applying to those who differ from us, terms which they do not themselves regard as just, and at the same time using them as nicknames, or words of reproach, — as the representatives of impiety, blasphemy, and irreligion. But that such denominational terms as Unitarian and Trinitarian, or Unitarian Christian and Trinitarian Christian, should excite feelings of rancor and ill-will amongst the various branches of the universal church, and be employed as synonymous with infidelity, idolatry, or antichristianity, is surely as unreasonable and improper as it would be to use the national distinctions of Frenchman and Spaniard to signify that these people are the natural enemies of Englishmen and Americans, and that they are, and ever will be, unworthy of belonging to the human race, — to the family and brotherhood of man.

Party spirit, in that sense in which I have spoken of it as a thing to be wholly renounced and sedulously shunned in religious matters, consists in a general, indefinite conformity to the views and practices of some party, — a zeal for the advancement of that party and the promotion of their objects, generally, and without limitation either of the time or of the objects themselves. . . . We are right when the objects proposed are in themselves good, and when these, and the means by which they are promoted, are distinctly specified: we are right in associating together for such purposes, provided we are careful to guard our minds against the insensible, insidious encroachments of party spirit; against being unconsciously led beyond the defined limits; so as to bind ourselves, in any thing that concerns religion, by an indefinite, general allegiance to any man or set of men. . . . If any one joins a regularly-formed religious association for the distributing of Bibles and other selected books, and for other such specified purposes, he does not bind himself to a general conformity of sentiments and practice in other points, with each other, or even with the majority of the members, but preserves his original independence. But it is otherwise if a man allows himself to be considered as belonging to a party, and as conforming indefinitely to their general views, their prevailing tone of sentiment, and their established practice. He may flatter himself, indeed, that, whenever he may see reason to

disapprove of any of these, he can withdraw. But the odium he would incur by such a step is but too likely to make him hesitate at taking it; and in the meantime, while hesitating, he is drawn on by little and little to acquiesce in, and ultimately to countenance, much that he would originally, and judging for himself, have shrunk from. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Essays on Dangers to Christian Faith*, pp. 92, 94–5, 97–8.

The divisions of the Christian church are undoubtedly much to be deplored. They present a most unseemly appearance to the world, of that religion which may be said to be "one and indivisible." They imply much imperfection on the part of its professors, occasion great stumbling to unbelievers, and impair the energy and resources which might be advantageously employed in assailing the common enemy. The causes of these divisions are to be sought in the ignorance, the weakness, and the prejudices of Christians; in indolent submission to authority on one part, and the love of influence on another; in the power of early habits and associations; and, above all, in the influence of a worldly spirit, which warps and governs the mind in a thousand ways. — WILLIAM ORME, *in his edition of Baxter's Practical Works*, vol. i. pp. 97, 98.

At that period [the period of the Reformation], Christians of every class and party believed that gross religious errors were punishable by the civil magistrate, — a Popish doctrine which they had not yet renounced, and which, it is to be feared, is not even to this day and in the most enlightened part of the world, exterminated from the breasts of all Protestants. By cherishing such a principle, they betray the best of causes, furnish occasion for the most injurious representations of Christianity, and, instead of proving that they have learned of their Master, who was "meek and lowly of heart," show that they imitate the misguided disciples who were for calling down fire from heaven. — DR. F. A. COX: *Life of Melancthon*, pp. 279–80.

Party spirit in religion is another spurious proof of piety.... Whenever men act together, the mind, by one of its mysterious powers, sees a new being in the union, and soon forms almost a personal attachment for it. It enlists men's pride and ambition, and arouses all their energies; and devotion to this imaginary existence becomes often one of the strongest passions of the human mind. It is one of the sins to which the human heart is most prone, and in which it is most impregnable. A man usually thinks it a virtue. He sees he is not working for himself, and persuades himself that it is the

principles of his party which are the object of his attachment. But this is not the case; for, when these principles spread partially into other parties, he is always displeased. He is never satisfied at seeing his opponents coming to the truth: they must come over to his side. This . . . spirit burns everywhere in the Christian church: it influences parish against parish, and society against society, and makes each denomination jealous and suspicious of the rest. It frowns upon the truth and the Christian prosperity which is not found within its own pale. It is the spirit of intolerance and exclusion. "We found one," it says, "casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him because he followeth not us." Banish this spirit for ever. If men will "cast out devils," no matter whom they follow: they must do it, if they do it at all, in Jesus' name, and no matter for the rest. We must not frown upon real piety or truth, because they do not appear in our own uniform. — JACOB ABBOTT: *The Corner-stone*, pp. 198–200.

The bigots of an earlier age [the Jews of Christ's time] were accustomed to speak of themselves as chosen of God, before all meaner creatures, holy and clean; while the Gentile nations were sinners beyond the reach of salvation, reprobate dogs. And why was this? It was because they, like the Pharisees of modern times, clung to the dogma, "out of *their* church, no salvation;" the latent principle of death in all those sects which have embraced, or ever do embrace, such a creed. . . . . Every man is to be esteemed who honestly endeavors to give a reason for his belief, and claims the freedom of its peaceful enjoyment, however mistaken or absurd he may be. To despise the intellect of another, to hint his want of integrity, or to ridicule his convictions of right, is but poor evidence either of philosophical judgment or Christian charity. The spirit that leagued with an emperor and excited him to murder the Anabaptists of Munster, burned Servetus at Geneva, hunted Roger Williams beyond the boundaries of civilization with no less savage rage, persecuted the elder Carroll in Maryland, and more recently burned the convent at Charlestown, as well as the churches of Philadelphia, is part and parcel of the bigoted priestcraft that dug the prisons of Venice and erected the Inquisition in Spain. Milton had good reason for asserting, that "Presbyter is but old priest writ large." — E. L. MAGOON: *Republican Christianity*, pp. 131, 259.

The refusal to exercise forbearance, and the attempt to ensure a complete uniformity, tend necessarily to produce, and, in the past history of the church, have actually produced, consequences the most

injurious and deplorable. While the conduct in question involves an audacious invasion of the prerogatives of Jesus Christ, by making new laws for his church, it tends inevitably to introduce those very strifes and divisions which it professes to avert; it checks free inquiry, and nurses a spirit of tame and slavish submission to human authority; it leads the professors of religion to fix their regards chiefly on subordinate topics and sectarian peculiarities, to the neglect of the vital truths of the gospel and "the weightier matters of the law;" it arrests the current of brotherly love, or turns it into a wrong channel, by diverting it towards those who reflect our own views and sentiments rather than towards those who exhibit conspicuously the lineaments of the Saviour's lovely image. All these baleful effects it has actually produced to a frightful extent; and, in addition, it has sometimes occasioned the practice of an unprincipled laxity; for the members of the same church have contented themselves with an agreement in a form of words, while yet they differed, and knew that they differed, in sentiment; thus tolerating or practising vile dissimulation to avoid an avowed and honest forbearance. — DR. ROBERT BALMER: *The Scripture Principles of Unity; in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 51, 52.

To avoid doing an apparent injustice to Dr. Balmer, we have given the latter sentence; but, though heartily agreeing with him in his disapproval of "an unprincipled laxity" and "vile dissimulation" as to matters of theological opinion, we cannot help thinking that the less a church interferes respecting the private sentiments of its members, and the more it attends to the purity of their conversations and lives, the better will it be for the true interests of Christianity, and for the peace and happiness of man.

Disputants are loudest and fiercest where God says least. . . . . Notwithstanding the power of public opinion in restraining on platforms, and in the pulpit, the exhibitions of a wretched sectarian and proselytizing spirit, the demon is not cast out, and appears even more horrid when it is seen looking from beneath the veil of an angel. Party spirit descends meekly from the pulpit, and takes its station at the head of the Lord's table, and from thence excommunicates many of the Lord's people, whom a few minutes before it pronounced to be brethren in Christ Jesus. The feast of love is made the feast of schism; and evangelical denominations, within the walls of their own temples, are as much keen partisans, excommunicating each other, as if there was no common ground on which they could meet, and as if all but themselves were given over to Satan. . . . . Bigotry and

sectarianism are still hot and scorching; only they are now ashamed of their real nature, and have put on various disguises, connected more or less with an assumption of extraordinary strictness and piety. . . . . When the men of the world see professing Christians broken up into little parties, which seem to hate each other in the inverse ratio in which they are agreed on the great cardinal points of their religion, they are naturally led to consider Christianity as based, to a considerable extent, upon pride and priestcraft. When they meet with the same rivalships and jealousies among saints that they meet with among secular men, they judge of them by the same standard. When sect "clashes with sect as harshly and unkindly as political factions" do, they consider all religious divisions as no better than a strife for power, drive all schismatics out of their presence, and turn aside altogether from what they consider a lurking, biting, phrenetic religion. The bitterness with which theologians will speak and write of each other, and the rancor and solemnity with which they will excommunicate each other at the head of the Lord's table, while yet they are confessedly one in Christ Jesus, is to worldly politicians a matter of utter loathing. — DR. GAVIN STRUTHERS: *Party Spirit, its Prevalence and Insidiousness; in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 381, 385, 391, 439–40.

The deplorable workings and effects of the sectarian spirit are pointed out with much impartiality in the Essay from which we have made the above extract, and are shown not to be peculiar to the Roman Catholic church, but to prevail in the English and Scotch establishments, and in the various "evangelical" bodies, particularly in North Britain, which have dissented from Papal and Protestant Episcopacy. Surely, if men who, forgetful of the benevolent spirit of the Master whom they profess to serve, and of the whole genius of his religion as contained in the New Testament, look down with supercilious pride upon such of their brethren as disagree with them merely in forms of church government and in subordinate points of faith, — if such men, to whom Christ's commandment of love seems to be still almost literally "new" or unheard of, have any just claim to be called his disciples, or regarded as members of his invisible church, — surely, those whom they pronounce to be heterodox or unevangelical, but who, notwithstanding, "love the Lord Jesus in sincerity," and, remembering his precept, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another," would not confine their affections and their sympathies to their own narrow circle, but would extend them to all who "name the name of Christ, and depart from iniquity," — surely, these may humbly hope that the great Founder of the universal church will permit them to sit at his feet as docile and reverent disciples, to learn more of his heavenly mind, and drink richer draughts of his holy and benign spirit.

SECT. VI. — FAITH, ORTHODOXY, HERESY, SCHISM, AND OTHER TERMS, OFTEN USED AS WATCHWORDS OF PARTY WARFARE.

> They prove their doctrine orthodox
> By ugly words and blows and knocks.
>
> SAMUEL BUTLER, *modified*.

§ 1. FAITH AND ORTHODOXY.

Almost all sects pretend that they are wiser and of sounder judgment than all the Christian world besides; yea, those that most palpably contradict the Scriptures (as the Papists in their half-communion and unintelligible service), and have no better reason why they so believe or do but because others have so believed and done already. But the greatest pretenders to orthodoxness are not the most orthodox; and, if they were, I can value them for that which they excel, without abating my due respect to the rest of the church. For the whole church is orthodox in all the essentials of Christianity, or else they were not Christians; and I must love all that are Christians with that special love that is due to the members of Christ, though I must superadd such esteem for those that are a little wiser or better than others, as they deserve. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Christian Directory; in Works*, vol. ii. p. 122.

A man may be orthodox in every point; he may not only espouse right opinions, but zealously defend them against all opposers; he may think justly concerning the incarnation of our Lord, concerning the ever-blessed Trinity, and every other doctrine, contained in the oracles of God; he may assent to all the three Creeds, — that called the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian; and yet it is possible he may have no religion at all, no more than a Jew, Turk, or Pagan. — SOUTH; *apud Southey's Commonplace Book*, second series, p. 16.

Every mean person who has nothing to recommend him but his orthodoxy, and owes that perhaps wholly to his ignorance, will think [if you venture to publish an unfashionable opinion] he has a right to trample upon you with contempt, to asperse your character with virulent reflections, to run down your writings as mean and pitiable performances, and give hard names to opinions which he does not understand. — BISHOP HARE: *Study of the Scriptures; in Sparks's Collection of Essays and Tracts*, vol. ii. p. 178.

Men have thought it an honor to be styled that which they call zealous orthodox, to be firmly linked to a certain party, to load others with calumnies, and to damn by an absolute authority the rest of mankind, but have taken no care to demonstrate the sincerity and fervor of their piety by an exact observation [observance] of the gospel morals; which has come to pass by reason that orthodoxy agrees very well with our passions, whereas the severe morals of the gospel are incompatible with our way of living. — LE CLERC: *Five Letters on the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*, p. 108.

As to orthodox, I should be glad to know the meaning of the epithet. Nothing, you say, can be plainer. The orthodox are those who, in religious matters, entertain right opinions. Be it so. How, then, is it possible I should know who they are that entertain right opinions, before I know what opinions are right? I must therefore unquestionably know orthodoxy, before I can know or judge who are orthodox. Now, to know the truths of religion, which you call orthodox, is the very end of my inquiries; and am I to begin these inquiries on the presumption, that without any inquiry I know it already? . . . . . There is nothing about which men have been, and still are, more divided. It has been accounted orthodox divinity in one age, which hath been branded as ridiculous fanaticism in the next. It is at this day deemed the perfection of orthodoxy in one country, which in an adjacent country is looked upon as damnable heresy. Nay, in the same country, hath not every sect a standard of their own? Accordingly, when any person seriously uses the word, before we can understand his meaning, we must know to what communion he belongs. When that is known, we comprehend him perfectly. By the orthodox he means always those who agree in opinion with him and his party; and by the heterodox, those who differ from him. When one says, then, of any teacher whatever, that all the orthodox acknowledge his orthodoxy, he says neither more nor less than this, "All who are of the same opinion with him, of which number I am one, believe him to be in the right." And is this any thing more than what may be asserted by some person or other, of every teacher that ever did or ever will exist? . . . To say the truth, we have but too many ecclesiastic terms and phrases which savor grossly of the arts of a crafty priesthood, who meant to keep the world in ignorance to secure an implicit faith in their own dogmas, and to intimidate men from an impartial inquiry into holy writ. — DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL: *Lectures on Systematic Theology and Pulpit Eloquence*, pp. 112–15.

A suspicion of fallibility would have been an useful principle to the professors of Christianity in every age: it would have choked the spirit of persecution in its birth, and have rendered not only the church of Rome, but every church in Christendom, more shy of assuming to itself the proud title of orthodox, and of branding every other with the opprobrious one of heterodox, than any of them have hitherto been. . . . It is difficult for any man entirely to divest himself of all prejudice; but he may surely take care, that it be not accompanied with an uncharitable propensity to stigmatize with reproachful appellations those who cannot measure the rectitude of the divine dispensations by his rule, nor seek their way to heaven by insisting on the path which he, in his overweening wisdom, has arrogantly presented as the only one which can lead men thither. . . . . What is this thing called *orthodoxy*, which mars the fortunes of honest men, misleads the judgment of princes, and occasionally endangers the stability of thrones? In the true meaning of the term, it is a sacred thing to which every denomination of Christians lays an arrogant and exclusive claim, but to which no man, no assembly of men, since the apostolic age, can prove a title. — BISHOP WATSON: *Preface to Theological Tracts*, vol. i. pp. xv. xvii.; and *Life*, p. 451.

The most ardent zeal, the most pertinacious obstinacy, is displayed in preserving the minutest article of what is called orthodox opinion. But, alas! what, in a world of woe like this, — what signifies our boasted orthodoxy in matters of mere speculation, in matters totally irrelevant to human happiness or misery? What signifies a jealous vigilance over thirty-nine articles, if we neglect one article, — the law of charity and love; if we overlook the "weightier matters" which Christ himself enacted as articles of his religion, indispensably to be subscribed by all who hope for salvation in him; I mean forgiveness of injuries, mercy, philanthropy, humility? — VICESIMUS KNOX: *Preface to Antipolemus; in Works*, vol. v. pp. 417–18.

Let us recollect, that speculations, however sound in their principles, however exact in their process, and however important in their results, are insufficient to fill up the measure of our duty, if they terminate solely in our inward persuasion, or in outward profession, or in transient though ardent feeling, or in mere orthodoxy, be it real or imaginary. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Sermon on Faith; in Works*, vol. v. p. 361.

In the New Testament, the absolute subserviency of doctrinal statements to the formation of the principles and habits of practical piety

is never lost sight of: we are continually reminded, that obedience is the end of all knowledge and of all religious impressions. But the tendency, it is to be feared, of much popular and orthodox instruction is to bestow on the belief of certain doctrines, combined with strong religious emotion, the importance of an ultimate object, to the neglect of that great principle, that "circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God." — ROBERT HALL: *Preface to Antinomianism Unmasked; in Works*, vol. ii. p. 461.

Orthodoxy by itself does not touch the conscience — does not quicken the affections: it does not connect itself in any manner with the moral faculties. It is not a religion, but a theory; and, inasmuch as it awakens no spiritual feelings, it consists easily either with the grossest absurdities or with the grossest corruptions. Orthodoxy, powerless when alone, becomes even efficient for evil at the moment when it combines itself with asceticism, superstition, and hierarchical ambition. What is the religious history of Europe, through a long course of time, but a narrative of the horrors and the immoralities that have sprung from this very combination? — ISAAC TAYLOR: *Lectures on Spiritual Christianity*, pp. 100–1.

This writer, however, holds Orthodoxy, or Trinitarianism, to be the basis of all Christian piety.

Let us, in explanation of the term "faith," advert to the wide distinction which obtains between the popular imagination of what it is, and the apostle's definition of what it is. The common conception about it is, that it consists in a correct apprehension of the truths of theology, or soundness of belief as opposed to error of belief. It appears to be a very prevalent impression, that faith lies in our judging rightly of the doctrines of the Bible, or that we have a proper understanding of them. And, in this way, the privileges annexed to faith in the New Testament are very apt to be regarded as a sort of remuneration for the soundness of our orthodoxy. Heaven is viewed as a kind of reward, if not for the worth of our doings, at least for the worth and the justness of our dogmata. Under the old economy, eternal life was held out as a return to us for right practice. Under the new economy, is it conceived by many, that it is held out to us as a return for right thinking. Figure two theologians to be listed, the one against the other, in controversy. He who espouses error is estimated to be a heretic, and wanting in the faith. He who espouses

truth is estimated to be a sound believer, so that his faith resolves itself into the accuracy of his creed. It is not, "Do this, and you shall live;" but it is, "Think thus, and you shall live;" and this seems to be the popular and prevailing imagination of being saved by faith, and being justified by faith. Now, look to the apostolical definition of faith, as being the "substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." .... Let us look to it, not as the mere acquiescence of the understanding in the dogmata of any sound or recognized creed, but as that which brings the future and the yet unseen of revelation so home to the mind, as that the mind is filled with a sense of their reality, and actually proceeds upon it. — DR THOMAS CHALMERS: *Select Works*, vol. i. pp. 410–11.

It may be safely affirmed, that no weak and fallible man ever yet held the whole of revealed truth free from the slightest mistake or defect. The bigot, however, will make no such confession. He maintains and defends his own creed as being perfect. It is the very type of truth. He condemns every man either as not holding the truth, or as holding it in a very defective way, who does not see with his eyes, and believe with his heart. All must lie down on the bed of orthodoxy which he has spread, and be conformed to it in length and breadth; otherwise he must be cast out of the church as a heretic, and shunned as if infected with leprosy. — DR. GAVIN STRUTHERS: *Party Spirit; in Essays on Christian Union*, p. 420.

§ 2. HERESY AND SCHISM.

It is a vain thing to talk of a heretic; for a man for his heart can think no otherwise than he does think. In the primitive times, there were many opinions, nothing scarce but some one or other held. One of these opinions being embraced by some prince, and received into his kingdom, the rest were condemned as heresies; and his religion, which was but one of the several opinions, first is said to be orthodox, and so have continued ever since the apostles. — JOHN SELDEN: *Table Talk: art.* 4, *Opinion.*

The word "heresy" is used in Scripture in a good sense, for a sect or division of opinion; or sometimes in a bad sense, for a false opinion, signally condemned. But no heresies are noted in Scripture but such as are great errors practical, such whose doctrines taught impiety, or such who denied the coming of Christ directly or by consequence; not remote or wiredrawn, but prime and immediate. Heresy is not

an error of the understanding, but an error of the will; and this is clearly insinuated in Scripture, in the style whereof faith and a good life are made one duty, and vice is called opposite to faith, and heresy opposed to holiness and sanctity. Indeed, if we remember that St. Paul reckons heresy amongst the works of the flesh, and ranks it with all manner of practical impieties, we shall easily perceive, that, if a man mingles not a vice with his opinion, — if he be innocent in his life, though deceived in his doctrine, — his error is his misery, not his crime. Now, every man that errs, though in a matter of consequence, so long as the foundation is entire, cannot be suspected justly guilty of a crime to give his error a formality of heresy. If his error be not voluntary, and part of an ill life, — then, because he lives a good life, he is a good man, and therefore no heretic. A wicked person in his error becomes heretic, when the good man in the same error shall have all the rewards of faith. For whatever an ill man believes, if he therefore believe it because it serves his own ends, be his belief true or false, the man hath an heretical mind; for, to serve his own ends, his mind is prepared to believe a lie. But a good man that believes what, according to his light and upon the use of his moral industry, he thinks true, whether he hits upon the right or no, — because he hath a mind desirous of truth, and prepared to believe every truth, is therefore acceptable to God, because nothing hindereth him from it but what he could not help. A man may maintain an opinion that is in itself damnable, and yet he — not knowing it so, and being invincibly led into it — may go to heaven: his opinion shall burn, and himself be saved. However, I find no opinions in Scripture called "damnable" but what are impious *in materia practica*, or entirely destructive of the faith or the body of Christianity, such of which St. Peter speaks, chap. ii. 1. — Abridged from JEREMY TAYLOR: *Liberty of Prophesying*, sect. ii. 2, 8, 12, 22, 36; *in Works*, vol. vii. pp. 456, 461–2, 466, 480, 492.

Deluded people! that do not consider, that the greatest heresy in the world is a wicked life, because it is so directly and fundamentally opposite to the whole design of the Christian faith and religion; and that do not consider, that God will sooner forgive a man a hundred defects of his understanding than one fault of his will. — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermon* 34; *in Works*, vol. ii. p. 333, Lond. edit. of 1748.

Hear me with that remnant of meekness and humility which thou hast left, thou confident, bitter, censorious man! Why must that man needs be taken for a heretic; a schismatic; a refractory, stubborn,

self-willed person; an antichristian, carnal, formal man, who is not of thy opinion in point of a controversy, of a form, of an order, of a circumstance, or subscription, or such like? It is possible it may be so; and it is possible thou mayest be more so thyself. But hast thou so patiently heard all that he hath to say, and so clearly discerned the truth on thy own side, and that this truth is made so evident to him as that nothing but wilful obstinacy can resist it, as will warrant all thy censures and contempt? or is it not an overvaluing of thy own understanding which makes thee so easily condemn all as insufferable that differ from it? ..... Moreover, your course is contrary to Christian humility, and proclaimeth the most abominable pride of the dividers. That you should call all the rest of the world schismatics and heretics, and say that none are Christians but you, — why, what are you above other men, that you should say, "Come not near me: I am holier than you"? Have none in the world, think you, faith, hope, and charity, but you? Can you indeed believe that none shall be saved but you? Alas that you should not only so much overlook God's graces in your brethren, but also be so insensible of your own infirmities! Have you so many errors and sins among you, and yet are none of the church but you? — RICHARD BAXTER: *Practical Works*, vol. xv. pp. 116–17; and vol. xvi. pp. 323–4.

Why are not ecclesiastical bodies as rigid and severe against heresies of practice as they are against heresies of speculation? Certainly there are heresies in morality as well as in theology. Councils and synods reduce the doctrines of faith to certain propositional points, and thunder anathemas against all who refuse to subscribe them. They say, "Cursed be he who does not believe the Divinity of Christ; cursed be he who does not believe the hypostatical union, and the mystery of the cross; cursed be he who denies the inward operations of grace, and the irresistible efficacy of the Holy Spirit!" I wish they would make a few canons against moral heresies. How many are there of this kind among our people! — JAMES SAURIN: *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 17.

How much soever of a schismatical or heretical spirit, in the apostolic sense of the terms ["schism" and "heresy"], may have contributed to the formation of the different sects into which the Christian world is at present divided, no person who, in the spirit of candor and charity, adheres to that which, to the best of his judgment, is right, though in this opinion he should be mistaken, is, in the Scriptural sense, either schismatic or heretic; and he, on the contrary, whatever sect he belong to, is more entitled to these odious appella-

tions, who is most apt to throw the imputation upon others. Both terms, for they denote only different degrees of the same bad quality, always indicate a disposition and practice unfriendly to peace, harmony, and love. — DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL: *The Four Gospels*, Diss. ix. part iv. sect. 15.

Who authorized either you or the pseudo-Athanasius to interpret catholic faith by belief, arising out of the apparent predominance of the grounds for, over those against, the truth of the positions asserted; much more, by belief as a mere passive acquiescence of the understanding? Were all damned who died during the period when *totus fere mundus factus est Arianus*, as one of the Fathers admits? Alas! alas! how long will it be ere Christians take the plain middle road between intolerance and indifference, by adopting the literal sense and Scriptural import of heresy, that is, wilful error, or belief originating in some perversion of the will; and of heretics (for such there are, nay, even orthodox heretics), that is, men wilfully unconscious of their own wilfulness, in their limpet-like adhesion to a favorite tenet? — SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE: *Literary Remains; in Works*, vol. v. p. 386–7, as edited by Professor Shedd.

We know no greater heresy than unnecessarily to divide good men, nor any object more worthy of ambition than to conciliate and unite them. Let the profane calumniate; let the sceptic deride; let the bigot frown; let the base and interested partisan seek to cover with unmerited dishonor all who cannot lend themselves to the support of his darling peculiarities, or his still more darling emoluments: but the Christian should endeavor, above all things, to present in his own practice, and so to win upon his brethren that they may equally present in theirs, the all-attractive spectacle of fidelity, tempered with goodness, and blended with humility and love. — DR. ROBERT STEPHENS M'ALL: *Discourses*, vol. i. p. 300.

Dr. M'ALL was an English Independent, or Orthodox Congregationalist, whose Discourses were edited after his death by the celebrated Wardlaw. They are replete with Christian sentiment, expressed in a high tone of eloquence.

Meantime, I wish to remind you, that one of St. Paul's favorite notions of heresy is "a doting about strifes of words." One side may be right in such a strife, and the other wrong; but both are heretical as to Christianity, because they lead men's minds away from the love of God and of Christ to questions essentially tempting to the intellect, and which tend to no profit towards godliness. And, again, I

think you will find that all the "false doctrines" spoken of by the apostles are doctrines of sheer wickedness; that their counterpart in modern times is to be found in the Anabaptists of Munster, or the Fifth Monarchy men, or in mere secular high churchmen or hypocritical evangelicals, — in those who make Christianity minister to lust, or to covetousness, or to ambition; not in those who interpret Scripture to the best of their conscience and ability, be their interpretation ever so erroneous. . . . Make the church a living and active society, like that of the first Christians, and then differences of opinion will either cease, or will signify nothing. Look through the Epistles, and you will find nothing there condemned as heresy but what was mere wickedness, if you consider the real nature and connection of the tenets condemned. For such differences of opinion as exist among Christians now, the fourteenth chapter of the Romans is the applicable lesson; not such passages as Tit. iii. 10, or 2 John 10, 11, or Jude 3 (that much abused verse), or 19 or 23. There is one anathema which is, indeed, holy and just, and most profitable for ourselves as well as for others, 1 Cor. xvi. 22; but this is not the anathema of a fond theology. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Letters* 70, 71; *in Life and Correspondence*, pp. 221–2.

If persons make their own crotchets articles of faith, and insist upon a perfect uniformity where it is not insisted upon by Jesus, they are schismatics of the very worst stamp, while yet they are proclaiming themselves strenuous advocates for the truth. — GAVIN STRUTHERS: *Party Spirit, its Prevalence and Insidiousness; in Essays on Christian Union*, p. 420.

Such sentiments are honorable alike to the heads and the hearts of those who penned them. They are the deductions of sound reason, or the outbursts of virtuous indignation, against the dicta of a presumptuous and an impious Infallibility, which decides, by feeling and prejudice and passion, what are truth and error, saving faith and damnable opinion. They may be regarded as indirect testimonies to the value of Christian Unitarianism; for, attached as the witnesses were to Trinitarian doctrines, they clung still more devotedly to the principles of Christian charity; and these principles are surely better promoted by a belief in the doctrine of One Universal Father, who "is Love," than by that of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, with its accompanying tenets. Happily, however, for Christendom, the wisdom and goodness which are the legitimate fruits of gospel simplicity have a more powerful influence on the hearts and conduct of many of the professors of reputed Orthodoxy, than the barren crudities, the metaphysical absurdities, and *infallible* dogmas of creeds.

SECT. VII. — THE CONSTITUENTS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. WISE AND GOOD MEN IN ALL DENOMINATIONS.

> What is a Church? — Let Truth and Reason speak,
> They would reply, "The faithful, poor, and meek,
> From Christian folds; the one selected race,
> Of all professions, and in every place."
>
> CRABBE.

He that fears the Lord of heaven and earth, walks humbly before him, thankfully lays hold of the message of redemption by Christ Jesus, strives to express his thankfulness by the sincerity of his obedience, is sorry with all his soul when he comes short of his duty, walks watchfully in the denial of himself, and holds no confederacy with any lust or known sin; if he falls in the least measure, is restless till he hath made his peace by true repentance, is true to his promise, just in his actions, charitable to the poor, sincere in his devotions; that will not deliberately dishonor God, though with the greatest security of impunity; that hath his hope in heaven, and his conversation in heaven; that dare not do an unjust act, though never so much to his advantage, — and all this because he sees Him that is invisible, and fears him because he loves him; fears him as well for his goodness as his greatness, — such a man, whether he be an Episcopal, or a Presbyterian, or an Independent, or a Baptist; whether he wears a surplice, or wears none; whether he hears organs, or hears none; whether he kneels at the communion, or for conscience' sake stands or sits, — he hath the life of religion in him, and that life acts in him, and will conform his soul to the image of his Saviour, and walk along with him to eternity, notwithstanding his practice or non-practice of these indifferents. — SIR MATTHEW HALE: *A Discourse of Religion*, pp. 33–4, Lond. 1684.

It is a hard case that we should think all Papists and Anabaptists and Sacramentaries to be fools and wicked persons. Certainly, among all these sects, there are very many wise men and good men, as well as erring. And although some . . . do not think their adversaries look like other men, yet certainly we find, by the results of their discourses and the transactions of their affairs of civil society, that they are men that speak and make syllogisms, and use reason, and read Scripture; and although they do no more understand all of it than we do, yet they endeavor to understand as much as concerns them, even all that they can, even all that concerns repentance from dead works,

and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And, therefore, methinks this also should be another consideration distinguishing the persons; for, if the persons be Christians in their lives, and Christians in their profession, — if they acknowledge the eternal Son of God for their Master and their Lord, and live in all relations as becomes persons making such professions, — why, then, should I hate such persons whom God loves, and who love God; who are partakers of Christ, and Christ hath a title to them; who dwell in Christ, and Christ in them, — because their understandings have not been brought up like mine, have not had the same masters? &c. — JEREMY TAYLOR: *Epist. Dedic. to the Liberty of Prophesying; in Works*, vol. vii. p. ccccii.

There is but one universal church of Christians in the world, of which Christ is the only King and Head, and every Christian is a member. . . . If thou hast faith and love and the Spirit, thou art certainly a Christian, and a member of Christ and of this universal church of Christians. . . . Thou art not saved for being a member of the church of Rome or Corinth or Ephesus or Philippi or Thessalonica, or of any other church, but for being a member of the universal church or body of Christ; that is, a Christian. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Christian Directory; in Practical Works*, vol. ii. p. 138.

We should be so far from lessening the number of true Christians, and from confining the church of Christ within a narrow compass, so as to exclude out of its communion the far greatest part of the professors of Christianity, that, on the contrary, we should enlarge the kingdom of Christ as much as we can, and extend our charity to all churches and Christians, of what denomination soever, as far as regard to truth and to the foundations of the Christian religion will permit us to believe and hope well of them; and rather be contented to err a little on the favorable and charitable part, than to be mistaken on the censorious and damning side. — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Serm.* 31; *in Works*, vol. ii. p. 266.

Men's different capacities and opportunities and tempers and education considered, it is in vain to expect that all good men should agree in all their notions of religion, any more than we see they do in any other concerns whatsoever. And who am I that I should dare to pronounce a sentence of reprobation against any one in whom there appear all the other characters of an humble, upright, sincere Christian, only because he has not perhaps met with the same information, or read the same books, or does not argue the same way; in a word, because he is not so wise, or, it may be is wiser than I am, and sees

farther than I do, and therefore is not exactly of my opinion in every thing? . . . Men's understandings are different, and they will argue different ways, and entertain different opinions from one another, about the same things, and yet may nevertheless deserve on all sides to be esteemed very good and wise men for all that. — ARCHBISHOP WAKE: *Sermons and Discourses*, pp. 184–5.

It is to be regretted, that, afterwards in the same discourse, this distinguished prelate seems disposed to confine his Christian charity, here so liberally expressed, only to Protestants who are agreed as to the "fundamentals of faith."

I think I have but one objection against your proceedings, — your insisting only on Presbyterian government, exclusive of all other ways of worshipping God. Will not this, dear sir, necessarily lead you, whenever you get the upper hand, to oppose and persecute all that differ from you in their church government, or outward way of worshipping God? . . . For my own part, though I profess myself a minister of the church of England, I am of a catholic spirit; and, if I see a man who loves the Lord Jesus in sincerity, I am not very solicitous to what outward communion he belongs. — GEORGE WHITEFIELD: *Letter* 150; *in Works*, vol. i. p. 140.

Persons may be quite right in their opinions, and yet have no religion at all; and, on the other hand, persons may be truly religious, who hold many wrong opinions. Can any one possibly doubt of this, while there are Romanists in the world? For who can deny, not only that many of them formerly have been truly religious (as Thomas à Kempis, Gregory Lopez, and the Marquis de Renty), but that many of them, even at this day, are real, inward Christians? And yet what a heap of erroneous opinions do they hold, delivered by tradition from their fathers! Nay, who can doubt of it while there are Calvinists in the world, — assertors of absolute predestination? For who will dare to affirm, that none of these are truly religious men? Not only many of them in the last century were burning and shining lights, but many of them are now real Christians, loving God and all mankind. And yet what are all the absurd opinions of all the Romanists in the world, compared to that one, that the God of love, the wise, just, merciful Father of the spirits of all flesh, has from all eternity fixed an absolute, unchangeable, irresistible decree, that part of mankind shall be saved, do what they will, and the rest damned, do what they can? . . . JOHN WESLEY: *Sermon* 60; *in Works*, vol. ii. p. 20.

To every truly pious and consistent Christian, literate or illiterate, he [the Author of the "Plea"] would give the right hand of fellowship, and bid him God-speed, in the name of the Lord, wherever he is found. . . . A liberal-minded and benevolent soul, who embraces every human being in the arms of his charity; who rises superior to the superstitious tribe of infallible doctors, – the *genus irritabile vatum*; who can pierce through the guise of human distinctions, and trace religious excellence among all orders and descriptions of men, — he would clasp to his bosom, make him room in his heart, and give him a place in the attic story of his affections. . . . . He that worships God most spiritually, and obeys him most universally, believing in the name of his only-begotten Son, is the best man, and most acceptable to the Divine Being, whether he be found in a church, in a Quaker's meeting-house, in a Dissenting place of worship of any other description, or upon the top of a mountain. . . . "In every nation," and among all denominations of men, "he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." And, if God will accept, why should not man? — DAVID SIMPSON: *Plea for Religion*, pp. xxiii. and 97.

I would educate young men in sentiments of the warmest affection and the highest reverence to the established religion of this free and enlightened country. I would at the same time endeavor to convince them, that, in all the various modes of Christian faith, a serious observer may discover some sound principles and many worthy men. I would tell them, that the wise and the good cherish within their own bosom a religion yet more pure and perfect than any formulary of speculation they externally profess; that their agreement upon points of supreme and indisputable moment is greater perhaps than they may themselves suspect; and that upon subjects the evidence of which is doubtful, and the importance of which is secondary, their differences are nominal rather than real, and often deserve to be imputed to the excess of vanity or zeal in the controversialist, more than to any defect of sagacity or integrity in the inquirer. — DR. S. PARR: *Discourse on Education; in Works*, vol. ii. pp. 171–2.

Where, after all the heart-burnings and blood-shedding occasioned by religious wars, — where is the true church of Christ but in the hearts of good men; the hearts of merciful believers, who from principle, in obedience to and for the love of Christ, as well as from sympathy, labor for peace; go about doing good; consulting, without local prejudice, the happiness of all men; and, instead of confining their good offices to a small part, endeavor to pour oil into the wounds

of suffering human nature? In the hearts of such men, united in love to God and his creatures, is the church of Christ. — VICESIMUS KNOX: *Preface to Antipolemus; in Works*, vol. v. p. 418.

If party names must subsist, let us carefully watch against a party spirit; let us direct our chief attention to what constitutes a Christian, and learn to prize most highly those great truths in which all good men are agreed. In a settled persuasion that what is disputed or obscure in the system of Christianity is, in that proportion, of little importance, compared to those fundamental truths which are inscribed on the page of revelation as with a sunbeam; whenever we see a Christian, let us esteem, let us love him; and, though he be weak in faith, receive him, "not to doubtful disputation." . . . . . At last the central principle of union [among the genuine disciples of Jesus Christ] begins to be extensively felt and acknowledged. Amid all the diversities of external discipline or subordinate opinion, the seed of God, the principle of spiritual and immortal life implanted in the soul, is recognized by the sincere followers of the Lamb as the transcendent point of mutual attraction in the midst of minor differences. Even Protestants and Catholics, influenced by a kindred piety, can now cordially embrace each other; as in the case of that zealous professor of the Romish church to whom I before referred [Leander Van Ess], who corresponds in terms of cordial affection with the Protestant secretary of the Bible Society for its foreign department. The essential spirit of religion begins to assert its ascendancy over all besides. The most enlightened, the selectest Christians in every denomination are ready to cultivate an intercourse with kindred spirits, with all who hold the same essential principles, in any other. — ROBERT HALL: *Sermons; in Works*, vol. iii. pp. 180 and 420–1.

Religious sects are not to be judged from the representations of their enemies, but are to be heard for themselves, in the pleadings of their best writers, not in the representations of those whose intemperate zeal is a misfortune to the sect to which they belong. . . . Imitate the forbearance of God, who throws the mantle of his mercy over all, and who will probably save, on the last day, the piously right and the piously wrong, seeking Jesus in humbleness of mind. — SYDNEY SMITH: *Sermon on Christian Charity; in Works*, p. 310.

For the rest, I think as that man of true catholic spirit and apostolic zeal, RICHARD BAXTER, thought; and my readers will thank me for conveying my reflections in his own words, in the following golden passage from his Life: . . . "I doubt not that God hath many sanctified

ones among them [the Papists], who have received the true doctrine of Christianity so practically, that their contradictory errors prevail not against them, to hinder their love of God and their salvation; but that their errors are like a conquerable dose of poison, which a healthful nature doth overcome. And I can never believe, that a man may not be saved by that religion which doth but bring him to a true love of God and to a heavenly mind and life, nor that God will ever cast a soul into hell that truly loveth him." — S. T. COLERIDGE: *Aids to Reflection; in Works*, vol. i. p. 240.

Amongst us there is a host of theologians, each wielding his separate authority over the creed and the conscience of his countrymen; and you Catholics have justly reproached us with our manifold and never-ending varieties. But here is a book [the Bible], the influence of which is throwing all these differences into the background, and bringing forward those great and substantial points of agreement which lead us to recognize the man of another creed to be essentially a Christian; and we want to widen this circle of fellowship, that we may be permitted to live in the exercise of one faith and of one charity along with you. — DR. THOMAS CHALMERS: *Select Works*, vol. iv. p. 247.

These are matters particular, but all bearing upon the great philosophical and Christian truth, which seems to me the very truth of truths, that Christian unity and the perfection of Christ's church are independent of theological articles of opinion; consisting in a moral state and moral and religious affections, which have existed in good Christians of all ages and all communions, along with an infinitely varying proportion of truth and error; that thus Christ's church has stood on a rock, and never failed; yet has always been marred with much of intellectual error, and also of practical resulting from the intellectual. . . . . I want to get out a series of "Church-of-England Tracts," which, after establishing again the supreme authority of Scripture and reason against tradition, councils, and fathers, and showing that reason is not rationalism, should then take two lines, — the one negative, the other positive; the negative one showing that the pretended unity, which has always been the idol of Judaizers, is worthless, impracticable, and the pursuit of it has split Christ's church into a thousand sects, and will keep it so split for ever: the other position, showing that the true unity is most precious, practicable, and has in fact been never lost; that, at all times and in all countries, there has been a succession of men, enjoying the blessings and showing forth

the fruits of Christ's Spirit; that in their lives, and in what is truly their religion, — i.e. in their prayers and hymns, — there has been a wonderful unity; that all sects have had amongst them the marks of Christ's catholic church, in the graces of his Spirit, and the confession of his name; for which purpose it might be useful to give, side by side, the martyrdoms, missionary labors, &c., of Catholics and Arians, Romanists and Protestants, Churchmen and Dissenters. Here is a grand field, giving room for learning, for eloquence, for acuteness, for judgment, and for a true love of Christ, in those who took part in it; and capable, I think, of doing much good. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Letters* 94, 130; *in Life and Correspondence*, pp. 239, 275.

In the most comprehensive sense of the term, the Christian church includes all genuine saints or believers; all, in every land, who receive Jesus Christ as their Prince and Saviour, who submit to him as their supreme and infallible guide in matters of religion, who rely for pardon and salvation on his atoning sacrifice, and who sincerely consecrate themselves to his service. All such persons, however widely separated in respect of place, and however diversified by external circumstances, or even by minor distinctions in religion, are represented in Scripture as "being not of the world, but called out of the world," and as component members of the same spiritual and heavenly association. — DR. ROBERT BALMER: *The Scripture Principles of Unity; in Essays on Christian Union*, p. 21.

This definition of the "Christian church" is sufficiently wide to include all believers in Jesus as the Messiah, and, consequently, all Unitarians who recognize the special inspiration of the same holy Personage, if the phrase "atoning sacrifice" be understood to refer to the death of Christ as one of the means appointed by God to reconcile to himself his erring and sinful children. We know not what was Dr. BALMER's conception of the atonement; but it is well known that the opinions of "orthodox" Christians differ much from each other on this point, some of them approximating to the views held by Unitarians.

I never can think of a narrow-minded Christian, — a Christian who, instead of giving free scope to his Christian affections, opening and expanding his heart to the admission of the entire family of God, contracts his spirit, and limits his communion of love to the denomination with which he is connected, — or of the man who actually imagines that family of God to consist of no more than those who assent to the shibboleth of his little party, — I never can think of such a man otherwise than as one who, through the operation of a widely

mistaken principle, is cheating himself of pleasure, and of pleasure the highest, the richest, the most exquisite in its character. . . . I would not for the world be the man who thus locks up his heart in an ice-house; who puts the short chain and the galling collar of bigotry on the neck of his Christian charity; who can look round, with a narrow sectarian satisfaction, on the members of his own little sect, and with cold indifference, or something worse, towards all beyond the pale, — can count, one by one, the number of those whom alone he owns as his brethren, and expects to meet in heaven; who estimates the Christianity of his party, and the evidence of its being the true flock of Christ, by its diminutiveness; finding in this his solace for what others can trace to far different causes, — to the wildness of its dogmas, and the uncharitable censoriousness of its members. — DR. RALPH WARDLAW, *in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 291–3.

The true church, the invisible community, is really and indivisibly one. Amidst all this division and disruption, beneath these angry and contentious elements, there is an essential unity, which, though limited to no age, confined to no country, restrained to no party, and seen in its entireness by no eye but that which is omniscient, really and always exists; a unity which nothing can impair, and which, while it is ever gathering up into itself the redeemed of the Lord, of every age, country, and communion, equally rejects the unregenerate of all of them. . . . Divide as they may into separate, visible communions, they [believers] cannot break away from the fellowship of the one invisible communion of saints. Into whatever number of distinct churches they may arrange themselves, they are fellow-members of the holy catholic church; and in their holier and happier moments they feel it, and rejoice in it, when, from the exercise of that faith which unites them to Christ, there arises a love too fervent and expansive to be confined within the narrow limits of their own party, and which, bursting through all sectarian barriers, flows in one mighty stream of holy sympathy to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. — JOHN ANGELL JAMES: *Union in relation to the Religious Parties of England; in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 148–50.

The true church is built on the foundation of the purest as well as most sacred liberty, and is cemented with unconstrained confidence and mutual love, the strongest of all bonds. It is a voluntary assemblage of equals, wherein every one obeys, and no one commands. . . . . The voluntary association of a truly Christian brotherhood, where each one enters and retires freely, seeking individual enjoyment only in the

general welfare, according to the simple conditions determined by one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, is the most efficacious alleviation, if not cure, of the three grand evils of this world; penury, bondage, and corruption. — E. L. MAGOON: *Repub. Christianity*, pp. 165–6, 313.

We want, as the great Robinson believed, "more light to break forth from God's holy word," — not from the formulas or the catechisms or the schools or the doctors, but from God's holy word, and especially from those parts of the word which represent the Christian truth as spirit and life, attainable only as our heart and spirit are configured to it, and able to offer it that sympathy which is the first condition of understanding, — attainable only by such as are in the Spirit themselves. This . . . will bring us . . . an era of renovated faith, spreading from circle to circle through the whole church of God on earth; the removal of divisions, the smoothing away of asperities, the realization of love as a bond of perfectness in all the saints. It will bring in such an era as many signs begin to foretoken; for it comes to me publicly, as relating to bodies of Christian ministers, and circles of believers in distant places, that they are longing for some fuller manifestation of grace, and debating the possibility of another and holier order of Christian life. It comes to me also privately, every few days, that ministers of God and Christian brethren, called to be saints, having no concert but in God, are hungering and thirsting after righteousness in a degree that is new to themselves, daring to hope and believe that they may be filled; testifying joyfully that Christ is a more complete Saviour, and the manifestation of God in the heart of faith a more intense reality, than they had before conceived. Meantime, as we all know, a feeling of fraternity is growing up silently in distant parts of the Christian world. Bigotry is tottering, rigidity growing flexible, and Christian hearts are yearning everywhere after a day of universal brotherhood in Christ Jesus. . . . Indeed, it is even a great maxim of philosophy, that, when we see men wide asunder beginning to take up the same thoughts and fall into the same sentiments, and that without concert or communication, we are generally to believe that something decisive in that direction is preparing; for it is the age that is working in them, or the God rather, probably, of all ages; and, accordingly, what engages so many at once is only the quickening in them of that seed on whose stalk the future is to blossom. Should we not, therefore, expect a gradual appearing of new life, which years only can prepare? Shall we not even dare to spread our Christian confidences by the measures of Providence, and in this

manner take up the hope, that, when so many signs and yearnings meet in their fulfilment, we may see a grand reviving of religion, that shall be marked by no village-boundaries, no walls of sect or name, but shall penetrate, vivify, and melt into brotherhood, at last, all who love our Lord Jesus Christ on earth? — HORACE BUSHNELL: *God in Christ*, pp. 297–9.

The liberal sentiments expressed in this section are not concessions in favor of Unitarianism considered by itself, or as one of the numerous branches of the religion of Jesus. Indeed, some of their authors would refuse the name of "Christian" to the worshipper of the Father only, whom Jesus addressed in prayer. But they are testimonies to the value and excellence of those great principles of charity and fraternal love, which, though constituting an essential and a prominent feature of Unitarianism, are more or less involved in every form of the Christian faith, and are deeply cherished by the truly catholic minds of every church, however they may be obscured, or impeded in their operation, by such dogmas of human conceit as belie the spirit of the gospel. According to these sentiments, Christianity was intended by its Founder, not for a few, but for all. His church embraces all, of whatever creed or denomination, who consecrate themselves to the service of God, Christ, and humanity. Individuals may err as to matters which are indifferent in themselves, or are obscurely set forth in Scripture; but, if they love goodness and reverence truth, — if they are faithful to the light which has been imparted to them, — they may all bend with lowly minds and contrite hearts in the mighty temple which the Saviour has erected to the praise of the universal Father. Men and women are disciples of Christ, not because they are Calvinists or Arminians, Presbyterians or Congregationalists, Papists or Protestants, but because, believing in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, they have the spirit of his Son. They are members of Christ's church, not because they are orthodox, can utter the shibboleths of the parties to which they are attached, or talk profoundly of the divine essence and decrees, but because in their words and their actions, in their lives and their deaths, they adopt and practise those common principles of the gospel, — love to God, and love to man, — which bigotry may mar, but cannot destroy; which superstition may blot, but never expunge; which error and sophisms may for a while hide from he view, but are unable wholly to conceal.

> "Religion pure,
> Unchanged in spirit, though its forms and codes
> Wear myriad modes,
> Contains all creeds within its mighty span, —
> The love of God, displayed in love of man."

The sentiments, indeed, which we have quoted in the preceding pages bear no proportion to the narrow-minded opinions laid down in many theological writings; but it would be an easy and a delightful task to make additional extracts of a similar character and tendency.

SECT. VIII. — UNITARIANS DISTINGUISHED FOR THEIR WORTH, PIETY INTELLIGENCE, AND LEARNING.

He who is truly a good man is more than half-way to being a Christian, by whatever name he is called. — SOUTH.

§ 1. INDIVIDUAL UNITARIANS.

The person of Arius was tall and graceful; his countenance calm, pale, and subdued; his manners engaging; his conversation fluent and persuasive. He was well acquainted with human sciences; as a disputant subtle, ingenious, and fertile in resources. — H. H. MILMAN: *History of Christianity*, book iii. chap. 4.

Arius . . . is said to have been . . . of a severe and gloomy appearance, though of captivating and modest manners. The excellence of his moral character seems to be sufficiently attested by the silence of his enemies to the contrary. That he was of a covetous and sensual disposition is an opinion unsupported by any historical evidence. — DR. LEONHARD SCHMITZ, *in Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, art. "Arius."

[Andrew] Dudith, who was certainly one of the most learned and eminent men of the sixteenth century, was born at Buda, in the year 1533. . . . He had, by the force of his genius and the study of the ancient orators, acquired such a masterly and irresistible eloquence, that in all public deliberations he carried every thing before him. . . . He was well acquainted with several branches of philosophy and the mathematics; with the sciences of physic, history, theology, and the civil law. . . . His life was regular and virtuous, his manners elegant and easy, and his benevolence warm and extensive. — ARCHIBALD MACLAINE, *as quoted by Dr. Murdock, in his translation of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, book iv. cent. xvi. sect. 3, part 2, chap. 4, § 9, note 20.

Dudith, an enlightened advocate for liberty of conscience, as well as an eminent scholar, was, in all probability, a Unitarian; but, as Maclaine and others speak doubtfully of this matter, the reader may, if he chooses, regard him only as a great and good man, belonging, without any peculiar designation, to the universal church of Christ.

Lælius Socinus was the son of Marianus, a celebrated lawyer; and to great learning and talents he added, as even his enemies acknowledge, a pure and blameless life. . . . . The affairs of the Unitarians

[in Poland] assumed a new aspect under the dexterity and industry of Faustus Socinus; a man of superior genius, of moderate learning, of a firm and resolute spirit, less erudite than his uncle Lælius, but more bold and courageous. . . . By his wealth, his eloquence, his abilities as a writer, the patronage of the great, the elegance of his manners, and other advantages which he possessed, he overcame at length all difficulties; and, by seasonably yielding at one time, and contesting at another, he brought the whole Unitarian people to surrender to those opinions of his which they had before contemned, and to coalesce and become one community. — J. L. MOSHEIM: *Ecclesiastical History*, book iv. cent. xvi. sect. 3, part 2, chap. 4, §§ 1 and 11; Dr. Murdock's translation.

Such and so considerable a man was [Faustus Socinus] the author and patron of this sect. All those qualities that excite the admiration and attract the regards of men, met in him; that, as it were with a charm, he bewitched all who conversed with him, and left on their minds strong impressions of wonder and affection towards him. He so excelled in fine parts and a lofty genius; such were the strength of his reasonings and the power of his eloquence; he displayed, in the sight of all, so many distinguished virtues, which he either professed, or counterfeited in an extraordinary degree, — that he appeared formed to engage the attachment of all mankind; and it is not the least surprising that he deceived great numbers, and drew them over to his party. So that what Augustin said of Faustus Manichæus may not improperly be applied to Faustus Socinus; that he was "magnum Diaboli laqueum," the Devil's decoy. — GEORGE ASHWELL: *De Socino et Socinianismo*, p. 18; *as quoted by Toulmin, in his Memoirs of Socinus*, pp. 15, 16.

Amid the ill temper displayed in this passage, it will be seen that the writer was forced to pay a high compliment to the virtues and genius of a man whose name has been so often held as synonymous with all that is vile and blasphemous in theological opinions. But, though Unitarians, whether believers or disbelievers in the pre-existence of Christ, have reason to venerate Socinus for what he did and suffered on behalf of their leading doctrine, — the simple oneness and paternal character of God, — they cannot regard him as the author or founder of their views, or as their leader in matters of religion; nor can they consent to be called by his honorable name. Thankful for all the helps which God has vouchsafed to them by the labors of the good and wise either of their own denomination or of others, they dare not bend in lowly reverence before any Lord and Master but the Man of Nazareth, the Holy One of God.

In this unhappy battle [the battle of Newbury, 1643] was slain the lord viscount Falkland; a person of such prodigious parts of learning and knowledge, of that inimitable sweetness and delight in conversation, of so flowing and obliging a humanity and goodness to mankind, and of that primitive simplicity and integrity of life, that, if there were no other brand upon this odious and accursed civil war than that single loss, it must be most infamous and execrable to all posterity. . . . He was a great cherisher of wit and fancy and good parts in any man, and, if he found them clouded with poverty or want, a most liberal and bountiful patron towards them, even above his fortune; of which, in those administrations, he was such a dispenser as if he had been trusted with it to such uses, and if there had been the least of vice in his expense, he might have been thought too prodigal. . . . His house being within ten miles of Oxford, he contracted familiarity and friendship with the most polite and accurate men of that university; who found such an immenseness of wit and such a solidity of judgment in him, so infinite a fancy, bound in by a most logical ratiocination, such a vast knowledge, that he was not ignorant in any thing, yet such an excessive humility as if he had known nothing, that they frequently resorted, and dwelt with him, as in a college situated in a purer air. . . . He was so great an enemy to that passion and uncharitableness which he saw produced by difference of opinion in matters of religion, that, in all disputations with priests and others of the Roman church, he affected to manifest all possible civility to their persons, and estimation of their parts. . . . Thus fell that incomparable young man, in the four and thirtieth year of his age, having so much despatched the business of life, that the oldest rarely attain to that immense knowledge, and the youngest enter not into the world with more innocence; and whosoever leads such a life needs not care upon how short warning it be taken from him. — LORD CLARENDON: *History of the Rebellion*, vol. iii. pp. 185–8, 198; Oxford, 1849.

The evidence for Lord Falkland's Unitarianism will be found in Wallace's Antitrinitarian Biography, vol. iii. pp. 152–6. According to John Aubrey, as quoted in that work, Lord Falkland "was the first Socinian in England."

We cite no appreciatory notices of "the ever-memorable John Hales of Eton" and "the immortal Chillingworth," because the evidence for their Unitarianism is less satisfactory. Whatever may have been their views respecting God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, their Christian principles were too broad to permit a bigoted adherence to any religious party, — too catholic to be moulded into any sectarian shape.

Sir Isaac Newton [was] the most splendid genius that has yet adorned human nature, and [is] by universal consent placed at the head of mathematics and of science. . . . He was exceedingly courteous and affable, even to the lowest, and never despised any man for want of capacity; but always expressed freely his resentment against immorality or impiety. He not only showed a great and constant regard to religion in general, as well by an exemplary life as in all his writings, but was also a firm believer in revealed religion, with one exception, — an important one, indeed, — that his sentiments on the doctrine of the Trinity by no means coincided with what are generally held. . . . An innate modesty and simplicity showed itself in all his actions and expressions. His whole life was one continued series of labor, patience, charity, generosity, temperance, piety, goodness, and every other virtue, without a mixture of any known vice whatsoever. — ALEXANDER CHALMERS: *Biographical Dictionary*, art. "Newton, Sir Isaac."

When we look back on the days of Newton, we annex a kind of mysterious greatness to him, who, by the pure force of his understanding, rose to such a gigantic elevation above the level of ordinary men; and the kings and warriors of other days sink into insignificance around him; and he, at this moment, stands forth to the public eye in a prouder array of glory than circles the memory of all the men of former generations; and, while all the vulgar grandeur of other days is now mouldering in forgetfulness, the achievements of our great astronomer are still fresh in the veneration of his countrymen, and they carry him forward on the stream of time with a reputation ever gathering, and the triumphs of a distinction that will never die. . . . I cannot forbear to do honor to the unpretending greatness of Newton, than whom I know not if ever there lighted on the face of our world, one in the character of whose admirable genius so much force and so much humility were more attractively blended. — DR. THOMAS CHALMERS: *Astronomical Discourses*, Discourse 2; *in Select Works*, vol. iv. pp. 370, 372.

If Christianity be not in their estimation true [if, in the estimation of absolute unbelievers, Christianity be not true], yet is there not at least a presumption in its favor, sufficient to entitle it to a serious examination, from its having been embraced, and that not blindly and implicitly, but upon full inquiry and deep consideration, by Bacon and Milton and Locke and Newton, and much the greater part of those who, by the reach of their understandings or the extent of their knowledge, and by the freedom too of their minds, and their daring to

combat existing prejudices, have called forth the respect and admiration of mankind? . . . . Through the bounty of Providence, the more widely spreading poison of infidelity has in our days been met with more numerous and more powerful antidotes. One of these has been already pointed out; and it should be matter of farther gratitude to every real Christian, that, in the very place on which modern infidelity had displayed the standard of victory, a warrior in the service of religion, a man of the most acute discernment and profound research, has been raised up by Providence to quell their triumph. It is almost superfluous to state, that Sir William Jones is here meant, who, from the testimony borne to his extraordinary talents by Sir John Shore, in his first address to the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, appears to have been a man of most extraordinary genius and astonishing erudition. — WILLIAM WILBERFORCE: *Practical View*, chap. vii. sect. 3.

With the exception of Lord Bacon, the men here named, whose moral and intellectual qualities rank them so high in the scale of humanity, and whose attachment to or defence of the Christian faith is regarded as presumptive evidence in its behalf, cherished, as is now well known, Unitarian opinions. To all who share in Wilberforce's admiration at seeing those men of master-minds sitting reverentially at the feet of Jesus, and who agree with him in the inference which he has drawn, the following remark by the same writer, in immediate connection, will scarcely be regarded in any other light than as inconsistent and illogical, if not unjust: "In the course which we lately traced from nominal orthodoxy to absolute infidelity, Unitarianism is, indeed, a sort of half-way house, . . . a stage on the journey, where sometimes a person indeed finally stops, but where not unfrequently he only pauses for a while, and then pursues his progress." So far from being true that the adoption of Unitarian principles generally leads to infidelity, as is implied in the charge adduced, that, with all its faults and shortcomings, probably no denomination in Christendom has been more faithful to its professions, or, if the number of its adherents be taken into account, has done so much in presenting the evidences of Christianity in a clear and cogent point of view, than that of Unitarians. Can Orthodoxy, with all its array of truly distinguished writers, place the names of any defenders of our common faith above those of Nathaniel Lardner, Joseph Priestley, William Ellery Channing, and Andrews Norton? We mean not in respect to their talents or their genius, — though they were unquestionably men of powerful intellect, — but merely as to the amount or the worth of their services as "apologists" for Christianity.

This year [1698], Thomas Firmin, a famous citizen of London, died. He was in great esteem for promoting many charitable designs; for looking after the poor of the city, and setting them to work; for raising great sums for schools and hospitals, and, indeed, for charities

of all sorts, private and public. He had such credit with the richest citizens, that he had the command of great wealth, as oft as there was occasion for it; and he laid out his own time chiefly in advancing all such designs. These things gained him a great reputation. He was called a Socinian, but was really an Arian. . . . Archbishop Tillotson, and some of the bishops, had lived in great friendship with Mr. Firmin, whose charitable temper they thought it became them to encourage. — BISHOP BURNET: *History of his Own Time*, vol. iii. p. 292; Lond. 1809.

I was exceedingly struck at reading the following Life; having long settled it in my mind, that the entertaining wrong notions concerning the Trinity was inconsistent with real piety. But I cannot argue against matter of fact. I dare not deny that Mr. Firmin was a pious man, although his notions of the Trinity were quite erroneous. — JOHN WESLEY: *Preface to an Extract from the Life of Thomas Firmin; in Works*, vol. vii. p. 574.

[William Whiston] has all his life been cultivating piety and virtue and good learning; rigidly constant himself in the public and private duties of religion, and always promoting in others virtue and such learning as he thought would conduce most to the honor of God, by manifesting the greatness and wisdom of his works. He has given the world sufficient proofs that he has not misspent his time, by very useful works of philosophy and mathematics: he has applied one to the explication of the other, and endeavored by both to display the glory of the great Creator. — BISHOP HARE: *Study of the Scriptures; in Sparks's Collection of Essays and Tracts*, vol. ii. p. 163.

Newton and Locke were esteemed Socinians; Lardner was an avowed one; Clarke and Whiston were declared Arians; Bull and Waterland were professed Athanasians. Who will take upon him to say, that these men were not equal to each other in probity and Scriptural knowledge? And, if that be admitted, surely we ought to learn no other lesson from the diversity of their opinions, except that of perfect moderation and good-will towards all those who happen to differ from ourselves. — BISHOP WATSON: *Appendix to Theological Tracts*, vol. vi.

I do actually feel a constant and deep sense of your goodness to me; and, which is much more, of your continual readiness to serve the public with those distinguished abilities which God has been pleased to give you, and which have rendered your writings so great a blessing to the Christian world. . . . In the interpretation of particular texts,

and the manner of stating particular doctrines, good men and good friends may have different apprehensions: but you always propose your sentiments with such good humor, modesty, candor, and frankness, as is very amiable and exemplary; and the grand desire of spreading righteousness, benevolence, prudence, the fear of God, and a heavenly temper and conversation, so plainly appears, particularly in this volume of sermons, that, were I a much stricter Calvinist than I am, I should honor and love the author, though I did not personally know him. — DR. PHILIP DODDRIDGE: *Letter to Dr. Nathaniel Lardner; apud Kippis's Life of Lardner*, Appendix No. 8.

Numberless tributes of respect have been paid by all sects of Christians to this indefatigable writer and good man.

I must contend, that the "Essay on Man, his Frame, his Duty, and his Expectations" [by David Hartley], stands forward as a specimen almost unique of elaborate theorizing, and a monument of absolute beauty, in the perfection of its dialectic ability. In this respect, it has, to my mind, the spotless beauty and the ideal proportions of some Grecian statue. — THOMAS DE QUINCEY: *Literary Reminiscences*, vol. i. pp. 169, 170.

This may well be regarded as high praise, coming, as it does, from a writer so able, but yet so prejudiced, as De Quincey; who introduces it by saying that "Coleridge was profoundly ashamed of the *shallow* Unitarianism of Hartley," and who takes frequent opportunity, in his writings, of speaking contemptuously of "Socinians" and "Socinianism," as well as of those divines in the church of England whom he accuses of favoring Unitarian sentiments.

Were I to publish an account of silenced and ejected ministers, I should be strongly tempted to insert Mr. Lindsey in the list which he mentions in his "Apology" with so much veneration. He certainly deserves as much respect and honor as any one of them for the part he has acted. Perhaps few of them exceeded him in learning and piety. I venerate him as I would any of your confessors. As to his particular sentiments, they are nothing to me. An honest, pious man, who makes such a sacrifice to truth and conscience as he has done, is a glorious character, and deserves the respect, esteem, and veneration of every true Christian. — JOB ORTON: *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 159; *as quoted by Belsham, in his Memoirs of Theophilus Lindsey*, p. 41.

It is said by some writers, that ORTON, who was the assistant and friend of Dr. Doddridge, became, in his latter years, an Arian. In the above-cited

paragraph, he refers to the circumstance of Lindsey's resignation of the vicarage of Catterick in Yorkshire, the advantages of which he renounced, on account of his having embraced the principles of Unitarianism, though he had no prospect of finding means of subsistence.

Reverend and dear Sir, — Although I am far separated from you, and possess but few opportunities of intercourse with you, yet my heart ever contemplates you with affection and gratitude. Nor, indeed, can it be otherwise; for, while I feel myself surrounded with comforts, I cannot, I trust, ever forget the man to whose kindness so many of them are owing. . . . Whatever differences of opinion may exist between us on religious subjects, I hope and trust that I shall be enabled to imitate that sincerity of soul, of which you have given me and the world so bright an example. My heart, I can truly say, is alive to the duties and the importance of Christianity, and I trust that I am not altogether a stranger to its pleasures. — WM. WINTERBOTHAM: *Extract from a Letter to the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey.*

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM was minister of a Calvinistic congregation at Plymouth Dock, who, under the Pitt administration, suffered four years' imprisonment on a false charge of having uttered seditious language. In this letter, written several years afterwards, he alludes to the sympathy and kindness which Lindsey had manifested towards him during his confinement. See Belsham's Memoirs of Lindsey, pp. 358–61.

Though of a sentiment in religion very different, I must say that Lindsey, Jebb, Hammond, Disney, and others, who have sacrificed their preferment [in the church of England] to the peace of their own minds, are honorable men deserving of all praise. — DAVID SIMPSON: *Plea for Religion*, p. 165.

Meek, gentle, and humane; acute, eloquent, and profoundly skilled in politics and philosophy, — take him for all and all, the qualities of his heart, with the abilities of his head, and you may rank Price among the first ornaments of his age. . . . Posterity will do him the justice of which the proud have robbed him, and snatch him from the calumniators, to place him in the temple of personal honor, high among the benefactors of the human race. — VICESIMUS KNOX: *Spirit of Despotism; in Works*, vol. v. p. 197.

The religious tenets of Dr. Priestley appear to me erroneous in the extreme; but I should be sorry to suffer any difference of sentiment to diminish my sensibility to virtue, or my admiration of genius. From him the poisoned arrow will fall pointless. His enlightened and active mind, his unwearied assiduity, the extent of his researches, the light he

has poured into almost every department of science, will be the admiration of that period when the greater part of those who have favored, or those who have opposed him, will be alike forgotten. Distinguished merit will ever rise superior to oppression, and will draw lustre from reproach. The vapors which gather round the rising sun, and follow it in its course, seldom fail, at the close of it, to form a magnificent theatre for its reception, and to invest with variegated tints, and with a softened effulgence, the luminary which they cannot hide. . . . . Though I disapprove of his [Dr. Price's] religious principles, I feel no hesitation in affirming, in spite of the frantic and unprincipled abuse of Burke, that a more ardent and enlightened friend of his country never lived than that venerable patriarch of freedom. — R. HALL: *Works*, vol. ii. pp. 23, and 99, 100.

Thus generously and eloquently does ROBERT HALL, the large-hearted Christian, defend the virtues and the reputation of the "Socinian" Priestley and the "Arian" Price. But the same Hall, as the narrow-minded Calvinist, in a Letter dated Feb. 5, 1816 (Works, vol. iii. p. 256), feels no hesitation in putting "Socinians" on a level with "professed infidels," and inferring from John vi. 40 and 1 John v. 12, that they will be excluded from the realms of heaven. Alas for some of the best and most devout of men, if superior virtue adorning the character in private life, and eminent endowments devoted to the public good, be passed by as altogether worthless in the great judgment-day, and nought avail but a belief in dogmas which have been regarded by their rejecters as dishonoring God and libelling humanity! May we not say, in the language of HALL himself (ii. p. 100), where he is vindicating his eulogy of Priestley, that "if any thing could sink Orthodoxy into contempt, it would be its association with such Gothic barbarity of sentiment"?

Let Dr. Priestley be confuted where he is mistaken. Let him be exposed where he is superficial. Let him be repressed where he is dogmatical. Let him be rebuked where he is censorious. But let not his attainments be depreciated, because they are numerous, almost without a parallel. Let not his talents be ridiculed, because they are superlatively great. Let not his morals be vilified, because they are correct without austerity, and exemplary without ostentation; because they present, even to common observers, the innocence of a hermit and the simplicity of a patriarch; and because a philosophic eye will at once discover in them the deep-fixed root of virtuous principle, and the solid trunk of virtuous habit. . . . . I have visited him, as I hope to visit him again, because he is an unaffected, unassuming, and very interesting companion. I will not, in consequence of our

different opinions, either impute to him the evil which he does not, or depreciate in him the good which he is allowed to do. I will not debase my understanding, nor prostitute my honor, by encouraging the clamors which have been raised against him, in vulgar minds, by certain persons, who would have done well to read before they wrote, to understand before they dogmatized, to examine before they condemned. Readily do I give him up, as the bold defender of heresy and schism, to the well-founded objections of his antagonists; but I cannot think his religion insincere, while he worships one Deity, in the name of one Saviour. . . . I know that his virtues, in private life, are acknowledged by his neighbors, admired by his congregation, and recorded almost by the unanimous suffrage of his most powerful and most distinguished antagonists. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Works*, vol. iii. pp. 317; 282–4.

In a letter to Archbishop Magee, from which we shall again take occasion to quote, Dr. PARR says that there were several Unitarians with whom he thought it an honor to be acquainted; avows "the sincere respect" which he felt "for their intellectual powers, their literary attainments, and their moral worth;" and concludes by making honorable mention of the distinguished writers among the Polish Socinians, called the *Fratres Poloni*, and amongst others, of the following English Unitarians: Dr. Nathaniel Lardner, Dr. John Jebb, Dr. John Taylor, Theophilus Lindsey, Thomas Belsham, the Duke of Grafton, Newcome Cappe, Charles Berry, E. Cogan, James Yates, J. G. Robberds, and Dr. William Shepherd. In reference to Belsham's work on the Epistles of Paul, Dr. PARR, in the Bibliotheca Parriana, p. 81, says: "I do not entirely agree with him upon some doctrinal points; but I ought to commend the matter, style, and spirit of the Preface; and, in my opinion, the translation does great credit to the diligence, judgment, erudition, and piety of my much-respected friend."

The more fervent admirers of Thomas De Quincey may place but little reliance on the testimony of Dr. PARR, as a Trinitarian, to the excellent qualities of mind and heart which he attributes to the English Unitarians; for, in an Essay which we think is marked alike by its exceeding cleverness and its bitter partisanship, the writer says (Philosophical Writers, vol. ii. p. 272), that PARR "has left repeated evidence, apart from his known leaning to Socinian views, that he had not in any stage of his life adopted any system at all which could properly class him with the believers in the Trinity." But the Rev. William Field, one of his biographers, who was intimately acquainted with him, and who was himself a Unitarian minister, says (vol. ii. p. 268) that PARR declared he was not a Unitarian. Dr. John Johnstone, another of his biographers, states (vol. vi. p. 685) that he had heard PARR repeatedly declare that his notions of the Trinity were precisely those of the profound Bishop Butler, author of the Analogy of Religion; in the Letter to Archbishop Magee previously referred to, Dr.

PARR requests his Grace to do him the justice to observe, that he "meant not, directly or indirectly, to defend the heretical opinions adopted by any of the worthies whom" he had "enumerated;" and, in a note to his Dedication of the Warburtonian Tracts (Works, vol. iii. p. 387), he says, "I by no means assent to the opinions which Dr. Priestley has endeavored to establish in his History of the Corruptions of Christianity." (See also Sermon 40, in Works, vol. vi. p. 464.)

Notwithstanding his eccentricities, his displays of vanity, his want of common prudence, and his political and theological antipathies, no one who has read the records of him published by Mr. Field and Dr. Johnstone can doubt, that, besides being, what he unquestionably was, a benevolent and pious man, a warm friend of popular education, and a bold advocate for Christian charity and universal toleration, he was also sincere and truthful in his professions. De Quincey himself, p. 293, — though he qualifies his praise by saying that, "in a degree which sometimes made him *not* a good man," he was "the mere football of passion," — is forced to sum up the appreciation of his character by the remark, that, "as a moral being, Dr. PARR was a good and conscientious man." May we not, therefore, reasonably conclude, that, when the "conscientious" curate of Hatton affirms that he did not hold the leading doctrine which distinguishes Unitarians from their fellow-Christians, he is quite worthy of our credence? And is not the testimony of this distinguished Episcopalian to the intellectual, moral, and religious character of English Unitarians deserving of high consideration, in opposition to the attempts that have been so often made to take from them "the jewel of their souls," — their "good name"?

If ever there was a writer whose wisdom is made to be useful in the time of need, it is Mrs. Barbauld. No moralist has ever more exactly touched the point of the greatest practicable purity, without being lost in exaggeration, or sinking into meanness. . . . It is the privilege of such excellent writers to command the sympathy of the distant and unborn. It is a delightful part of their fame; and no writer is more entitled to it than Mrs. Barbauld. — SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH: *Letter to Mrs. John Taylor, Norwich; in Memoirs of his Life*, vol. i. pp. 441–2.

We have taken for granted that Sir JAMES was orthodox as to the doctrine of the Trinity; but, if otherwise, as some of his expressions recorded in the Memoirs would seem to imply, his opinion of the moral influence of Mrs. Barbauld's writings may not be the less just. Whatever were his religious views, he unquestionably combined in his character the qualities of philosopher, patriot, moralist, and Christian.

I sit down to thank your Grace for your kind attention in sending me the "Improved Version of the New Testament." . . . I give due praise to the Committee for their Introduction to this work: it is

written with the sincerity becoming a Christian, and with the erudition becoming a translator and a commentator on so important a book. — BISHOP WATSON: *Letter to the Duke of Grafton; in Life of Watson*, pp. 492–3.

It is a well-known fact that Thomas Belsham was the principal editor of this work. Notwithstanding all that has been said of it by orthodox writers as the representative of Unitarian interpretations, neither the version, which was founded on that of Archbishop Newcome, nor the notes, however valuable, have been regarded by Unitarians in general as an authority binding on them.

My previous impressions of his [Dr. Lant Carpenter's] amiable and upright character have been strengthened by the perusal of his work [entitled, "An Examination of Charges against Unitarians and Unitarianism"]. His candor, integrity, and good temper, besides his intellectual ability, give to his writings an immense advantage over the imbecile arrogance, the rash crudities, and the still more dishonorable artifices, of some persons on whom he has felt himself called to animadvert. — JOHN PYE SMITH: *Scripture Testimony*, vol. ii. p. 476, fourth edition.

Dr. SMITH's concluding remarks evidently refer, in particular, to Archbishop Magee, whose Postscript to his work on the Atonement is dishonorably distinguished by the foulest injustice to the character and talents of English Unitarians.

When we see a fellow-man and fellow-sinner, whose character is adorned, not only with blameless morals and with those honorable decencies of life to which the world pays homage, but with untiring activity in excellent deeds, warm-hearted beneficence, exemplary virtue in all the walks of life, and the clearest evidence, to those who possess full and close opportunities for the observation, of constant "walking with God," not in the solemnities of public worship only, but in the family and the most retired privacy; and when this habit of life has been sustained, with unaffected simplicity and uncompromising constancy, during a life long, active, and exposed to searching observation; — when such a character is presented to our view, it would warrant the suspicion of an obtuse understanding, or, what is worse, a cold heart, not to resemble Barnabas, "who, when he came and saw the grace of God, was glad; for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." . . . We have been led almost unavoidably into this train of reflections, by opening the volume before us ["Sermons on Practical Subjects, by the late Lant Carpenter, LL.D."], and under

the influence of high personal regard to its author. In that feeling we only participate with many both of orthodox Dissenters and the evangelical members of the Establishment. It was scarcely possible for an upright person to know Dr. Carpenter, and not to love and venerate him. — *Eclectic Review for June*, 1841; new series, vol. ix. pp. 669–70.

In the same Review for February, 1843 (vol. xiii. pp. 205–19), may be seen an article occasioned by the publication of the "Memoirs of the Life of Dr. Carpenter." It is written in a liberal and Christian spirit; and, though widely differing from Carpenter in the religious opinions which he held, the author expresses the warmest reverence for the character of that excellent man.

When the day comes when honor will be done to whom honor is due, he [Dr. GUTHRIE] can fancy the crowd of those whose fame poets have sung, and to whose memory monuments have been raised, dividing like a wave; and, passing the great and the noble and the mighty of the land, this poor, obscure old man stepping forward, and receiving the especial notice of Him who said, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these, ye did it also to me." — *Extract from Speech delivered by the Rev. Dr. Guthrie, at Edinburgh, February*, 1855; *apud London Inquirer.*

Dr. GUTHRIE, who is one of the influential ministers of the Free Church of Scotland, refers to the late John Pounds, the Portsmouth cobbler, of philanthropic celebrity. This most worthy man, this friend of destitute and ignorant children, is known in England to have held Unitarian views.

The late Mr. Buckminster, of Boston, . . . was one of the most accomplished scholars of his age. — DR. GARDINER SPRING: *First Things*, vol. ii. p. 357.

Dr. Channing was, notwithstanding the errors of his theological opinions, a beautiful specimen of a man, — warm, serious, philanthropic, calm, self-controlled, earnest, and often enthusiastic. With a refined taste, a love of letters, and a noble independence of mind, he joined a cultivated understanding, an effective style, and an admirable eloquence. — *Christian Review for June*, 1848; vol. xiii. p. 305.

William Ellery Channing was what all orthodox believers will admit to be much better [than a Socinian]: he was an Arian, and a very high one; but, more than this, he was a man of purest sincerity, of profound humility, and universal charity. Channing must, in fact, be admitted to have been either a saint or a hypocrite; and the man who, after a personal acquaintance with him, or the reading of his works

and biography, is prepared to say he was a hypocrite, may be assured that he is not much unfitted to be one himself. — ABEL STEVENS, *in Methodist Quarterly Review for January*, 1849.

Whatever kind of Arianism Channing may have professed to hold, we are inclined to believe that, though he did not sympathize either with the religious tenets of Socinus or with the philosophic speculations of Priestley and Belsham, his writings in general are pervaded by the doctrine, — which appears to be less esteemed than formerly by American Unitarians, but which, whether true or not, is consistent with the loftiest conceptions of the mission and character of Christ, — that our Lord was, while on earth, whatever he may have previously been in heaven, a human being, not merely in the properties of his body, but in the faculties and affections of his soul. Instead of saying that Channing was either an Arian or a Socinian, it would be perhaps more correct to speak of him simply as a Unitarian Christian. This remark is made only by way of correcting what we think to be a mistake, which does not lessen the value or truth of the eulogium paid by the writer to the purity and liberality of Channing's character.

We have no sympathy with the distinguishing elements of his creed [the creed of Henry Ware, jun.]; we believe it to be unscriptural; yet, when we see constantly appearing his self-condemnation, his sense of unworthiness, his reverence of God, his efforts to do good to men's souls, his submission to the most painful allotments of Providence, his calmness and joy in the prospect of death, following an unusually spotless and serious life, we cannot find it in our heart to condemn him "because he followeth not with us." — *Christian Review for May*, 1846; vol. xi. p. 148.

A true, faithful daughter, wife, mother, friend; with no eccentricities, no extravagances, no marvellous qualities of head or hand; but with an honest truthfulness of nature, a willing spirit of self-sacrifice, and an ever-loving heart, — such was Mary L. Ware. . . . It is by such women that woman's rights are best vindicated by the steadfast performance of women's duties. Mrs. Ware's religious life was pure and unspotted; and, had she lived in a warmer atmosphere of Christian feeling, she would have been a model, besides, of Christian experience. — *Methodist Quarterly Review for July*, 1853; fourth series, vol. v. p. 314.

No translation has appeared in England, since that of Isaiah by Lowth, which can sustain a reputable comparison with that of the book of Job by Mr. Noyes. With some slight exceptions, this latter is very much what we could wish it to be. — *Spirit of the Pilgrims for February*, 1829; vol. ii. p. 93.

The volume which bears the title given above ["The Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels, by Andrews Norton; vol. 1; Boston, 1837"] is certainly a production of no ordinary stamp, and is a phenomenon in our literary hemisphere which ought to excite much interest. . . . Mr. Norton has cleared himself most explicitly and fully from the charge that has sometimes been made against him, viz., that he is a Naturalist, or a so-called Rationalist of the lowest order. That the Saviour is a teacher from God, and endued with miraculous powers, is what he openly declares himself to believe. — MOSES STUART, *in Biblical Repository for April*, 1838; vol. xi. pp. 265, 287.

Professor Norton's work [on the Genuineness of the Gospels] . . . is highly honorable to the writer's learning and diligence; and, as the American edition was dear and very scarce, we are not surprised that it should be republished in London. [After expressing his dissatisfaction with Mr. Norton's views respecting the books of the Old Testament, the reviewer proceeds:] It is but justice to the author to say, at the same time, that some of his suggestions are worthy of consideration; proceeding, as they apparently do, from a mind of independent habits, richly furnished, and patient in the pursuit of truth. It is our notion that the cause of Orthodoxy will be better served by calmly examining what he says, than by hastily denouncing him as an unbeliever. — *Eclectic Review for April*, 1848; new series, vol. xxiii. pp. 437–9.

§ 2. UNITARIANS IN GENERAL.

Socinus and his followers, being great masters of reason, and deeply learned in matters of morality, mingle almost all religion with it, and form religion purely to the model and platform of it. — SIR MATTHEW HALE: *A Discourse of Religion*, p. 27.

They [the Perfectionists] live strictly, and in many things speak rationally, and in some things very confidently. They excel the Socinians in the strictness of their doctrine, but, in my opinion, fall extremely short of them in their expositions of the practical Scripture. — JEREMY TAYLOR: *Letter to Evelyn*; *Works*, vol. i. p. lxxxv.

Yet to do right to the writers on that [the Socinian] side, I must own, that generally they are a pattern of the fair way of disputing, and of debating matters of religion without heat and unseemly reflections upon their adversaries. . . . They generally argue matters with that temper and gravity, and with that freedom from passion and

transport, which becomes a serious and weighty argument; and, for the most part, they reason closely and clearly, with extraordinary guard and caution, with great dexterity and decency, and yet with smartness and subtilty enough; with a very gentle heat and few hard words, — virtues to be praised wherever they are found, yea, even in an enemy, and very worthy our imitation. In a word, they are the strongest managers of a weak cause, and which is ill founded at the bottom, that perhaps ever yet meddled with controversy; insomuch that some of the Protestants and the generality of the Popish writers, and even of the Jesuits themselves, who pretend to all the reason and subtilty in the world, are, in comparison of them, but mere scolds and bunglers. — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermon* 44; *in Works*, vol. iii. pp. 197–8.

I must also do this right to the Unitarians as to own, that their rules in morality are exact and severe; that they are generally men of probity, justice, and charity, and seem to be very much in earnest in pressing the obligations to very high degrees in virtue. — BISHOP BURNET, *as quoted by Adam, in Relig. World Displayed*, vol. ii. p. 173.

See also Life of Burnet, by his son, prefixed to the "History of His Own Time," vol. i. p. xi. In the passage here referred to, his biographer says that in 1664 the Bishop went to Holland, and became acquainted with the leading Dutch Arminians, Lutherans, Unitarians, &c.; "amongst each of whom, he used frequently to declare, he had met with men of such real piety and virtue" that he became fixed in his principle of universal charity.

In stating and describing the duties of men, they [the Polish Socinians] were obliged to be uncommonly rigorous, because they maintained that the object for which God sent Jesus Christ into the world was to promulgate a most perfect law. . . . Here also we unexpectedly meet with this singularity, that, while on other subjects they boldly offer the greatest violence to the language of the sacred writers in order to obtain support for their doctrines, they require that whatever is found in the Scriptures relating to the life and to morals should be understood and construed in the most simple and literal manner. — J. L. MOSHEIM: *Ecclesiastical History*, book iv. cent. xvi. sect. 3, part 2, chap. 4, § 18.

In the honest exercise of the reasoning powers with which God endowed them, the Polish Unitarians, so "uncommonly rigorous" in the inculcation and practice of the moral duties of the gospel, came to a different conclusion in religious matters from other Protestant churches; and therefore they "boldly offered the greatest violence to the language of the sacred writers."

With regard to their moral code, the principles of the Unitarians do not seem to admit their loosening, in the least, the bonds of duty: on the contrary, they appear to be actuated by an earnest desire to promote practical religion. . . . Love is, with them, the fulfilling of the law; and the habitual practice of virtue, from a principle of love to God and benevolence to man, is, in their judgment, "the sum and substance of Christianity." — ROBERT ADAM: *Religious World Displayed*, art. "Unitarians," vol. ii. p. 173.

Extract from a Letter to Archbishop Magee. — With surprise and with concern, I observed that in one of them [one of the Charges] your Grace has spoken sweepingly of the Unitarians as illiterate. The expression, my Lord, astonished me. . . . In a dispute which, about one hundred and fifty years ago, was carried on with great violence, Bishop WETTENHAL wrote a very judicious, candid, and conciliatory pamphlet, which I found in a huge mass of controversial writings, in which he describes the Socinians as active, as zealous, as acute, as dexterous in disputation, as blameless in the general tenor of their lives, and, he adds, even pious, with exception to their own peculiar tenets. Every man of common sense, my Lord, will perceive that the qualifying words are the result of discretion and episcopal decorum, and were intended probably for a kind of sop to soften the Cerberean part of the priesthood. Be this as it may, the representation which Bishop WETTENHAL gave of his Socinian contemporaries corresponds nearly with my own observations upon my own Unitarian contemporaries. . . . . *Extract from a Letter to the Dissenters of Birmingham.* — Though he [Dr. PARR, speaking of himself] does not profess himself an advocate of many of your tenets [the tenets held by the Birmingham Unitarians], he can with sincerity declare himself not an enemy to your persons. He knows only few among you, but he thinks well of many. He respects you for temperance and decency in private life; for diligence in your employments, and punctuality in your engagements; for economy without parsimony, and liberality without profusion; for the readiness you show to relieve distress and to encourage merit, with little or no distinction of party; for the knowledge which many of you have acquired by the dedication of your leisure hours to intellectual improvement, and for the regularity with which most of you are said to attend religious worship. As to some late deplorable events, he believes that you have been misrepresented: he knows that you have been wronged. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Works*, vol. i. pp. 672–3; and vol. iii. p. 306.

The Unitarian teachers by no means profess to absolve their followers from the unbending strictness of Christian morality. They prescribe the predominant love of God, and an habitual spirit of devotion. — WM. WILBERFORCE: *Practical View of the Prevailing Religious Systems*, chap. vii. sect. 3.

So far, well. "But," this distinguished philanthropist adds, "it is an unquestionable fact, . . . that this class of religionists is not in general distinguished for superior purity of life, and still less for that frame of mind which . . . the word of God prescribes to us as one of the surest tests of our experiencing the vital power of Christianity. On the contrary, in point of fact, Unitarianism seems to be resorted to, not merely by those who are disgusted with the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, but by those also who are seeking a refuge from the strictness of her practical precepts," &c. How easily, by adopting the same principles of reasoning, might Deists prove Christianity in general to be answerable for all the vices of her professed adherents! The sweeping charges, however, made here against the moral and religious character of Unitarians are refuted by the more candid statements of other opponents, quoted in our pages.

I cannot conclude without expressing the conviction, that much consideration is due, both of respect and of affectionate concern, to those who hold the sentiments which in these pages have been opposed. To the great talents and labors of many of them, the Christian world is under eminent obligations for some of the most valuable works on the evidences of revealed religion, and for their services to the cause of religious liberty and the rights of conscience. — DR. JOHN PYE SMITH: *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. ii. p. 424.

In their [the Unitarian] body, I number many of the friends of my early days; and the recollection of the intercourse of the past is even now delightful: — men who dignify and adorn the stations which they occupy in society; some of whom will leave their names to posterity, identified with the improvements of science, the cultivation of the arts which embellish human life, and the grand schemes of philanthropy by which the present condition of man is elevated and purified, have I had the honor of numbering among my friends. — DR. THOMAS BYRTH: *Lecture on Unitarian Interpretation; in Liverpool Controversy*, p. 159.

There can be no doubt, that, by the existing law, the sect of Unitarians is entitled to the fullest measure of toleration; and it would be absurd to hold, that there was any thing to corrupt virtue, or outrage decency, in tenets which have been advocated in our own days by men of such eminent talents, exemplary piety, and pure lives, as Price,

Priestley, and Channing, and to which there is reason to think neither Milton nor Newton was disinclined. — LORD JEFFREY; *apud Christian Reformer*, new series, vol. vi. p. 194.

At least three quarters of my time have been spent among writers of the Unitarian class, from whom I have received, with gratitude, much instruction relative to the philology, the exegesis, and the literary history of the Scriptures. — MOSES STUART: *Answer to Channing*, Let. iii.

This passage does not appear in the last edition of Stuart's Letters, published 1846, in a volume of his writings entitled "Miscellanies."

Many of the teachers of this [the Unitarian] heresy are thoroughly skilled in scholastic theology, logic, and metaphysics; in history, antiquities, philology, and modern science; well versed in the ancient languages; bold and subtle biblical critics; prepared to take advantage of an imprudent or incautious adversary; and thus to triumph over truth itself in the eyes of superficial observers, when their sophistry seems to get the victory over its unskilful defender. — PHILIP LINDSLY: *A Plea for the Theol. Seminary at Princeton, N. J.*, pp. 28–9, third edition; Trenton, 1821.

Professor LINDSLY prefaces these remarks, — which, despite of the latter portion, will be seen to be highly laudatory, — by saying that "Modern Unitarianism is exactly suited to the natural character of men," to the depravity of their hearts, and "is more to be dreaded than any species of infidelity ever yet avowed." That is to say, a religion which teaches that "as a man soweth, so shall he reap," — which, in the name of the great Messenger of Heaven, assures us that we are responsible to God for every thought we think, every feeling we cherish, every word we utter, every act we perform, — "is more to be dreaded" than the infidelity which disowns the God of nature and revelation, which ignores alike the gospel of Christ and the dictates of conscience, and which therefore makes no distinction between virtue and vice. The heretical teachers, however, whose belief in God and Christ, heaven and hell, is worse than *any* species of infidelity, are "many of them," the writer in a note kindly says, "no doubt sincere in their profession" of Christianity.

The defect of the liberal [the Unitarian] school is, that their religion is not moral. We mean not strongly and distinctively so. We know that none insist more earnestly than they on a good life, and on the vanity of all religious pretension without it. . . . We give them the highest praise for the estimate in which they hold the graceful amenities and the sweeter charities of social intercourse. We give them

the highest praise for insisting on kindness to all, as the only spirit which a Christian should cherish; courtesy, as the only external robe which he should wear; and good works, as the only results that should follow in the path in which he treads. We admire the high spirit of honor, the delicate sense of propriety, the stern commercial integrity, which are fostered and exhibited by so many who are trained under the influences of liberal Christianity. The intellectual spirit, the elevation above the vulgar gentility of mere wealth, which are diffused through many — not all — of its social circles; the truthfulness to nature, in manners and in taste; the high appreciation of intellectual and moral institutions; the public spirit which so lavishly provides for them; and, above all, the strict and careful conscientiousness which trains and moulds many an esteemed and honored friend, — are virtues of no mean value, and are not the chance growth of nature. They show culture, — intellectual, social, moral, — of the highest order. But these in themselves are not religion. . . . . We cannot think of them as inheriting and upholding so many of the religious and social institutions founded by their and our honored sires of the Pilgrim stock, without caring for them for the fathers' sake. We honor, for its own, a religious community that embraces so much that is noble in cultivated intellect; so much that is high and honorable in its noble spirit; so much that is enlarged and generous in its social feelings. But, &c. — *New Englander for October*, 1844; vol. ii. pp. 537, 539, 558.

In all ages, ever since the days of Celestius, Julian, and Pelagius, there have been, in large numbers, men highly estimable for intelligence and benevolence, and animated by a strong desire of urging society onward in the pursuit of moral excellence, who have, nevertheless, earnestly, perseveringly, and with deep emotion, opposed this system [the peculiar characteristic of which is the doctrine of a supernatural regeneration rendered necessary by the native and original depravity of man], as at war with the fundamental principles of honor and right, and hostile to the best interests of humanity. — Dr. Edward Beecher: *Conflict of Ages*, p. 3.

In this paragraph, Dr. Beecher refers particularly to Unitarians; and afterwards, when quoting from some of their writers, he speaks of Judge Story as "that great luminary of American jurisprudence;" of Channing as a "distinguished philanthropist;" and of "other eminent men" belonging to this denomination of Christians, such as Dr. John Taylor, Ware, Sparks, Norton, Dewey, Burnap, and E. H. Sears. Their opposition to Augustinian and Calvinistic theology he does not, as many of his orthodox brethren,

attribute to the depravity of man's heart, to human pride, carnal reason, or hatred to the truth, but, while dissenting from their views, candidly owns that "they were actuated by noble and sublime principles," and that "the existence of the Unitarian body is a providential protest in favor of the great principles of honor and right," on the part of God, towards the descendants of Adam. One of the great excellences of Dr. BEECHER's remarkable and paradoxical work is, that he avoids the dogmatizing and illiberal tone which is so common among controversialists, and throughout it demeans himself, not only as a scholar, but as a gentleman and a Christian.

You [Unitarians] are, I am aware, benevolent men, a great many of you eager for sanitary, social, political reformation. In so far as you feel — and I am sure many of you do feel — a sincere, fervent admiration and love for the character of Jesus Christ, in so far as you believe him to be the wisest, holiest, most benignant Teacher the world ever had, are not you in danger of setting a man above God? .... In the sad hours of your life, the recollection of that Man you read of in your childhood, the Man of sorrows, the great sympathizer with human woes and sufferings, rises up before you, I know: it has a reality for you, then; you feel it to be not only beautiful, but true.... While we are frivolous, exclusive, heartless, no arguments ought to convince us of Christ's incarnation: they would carry their own condemnation with them, if they did. When we are aroused to think earnestly what we are, what our relation to our fellow-men is, what God is, — the voice which says, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," "The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil," will no more be thought of as the voice of an apostle. We shall know that he is speaking to us himself, and that he is the Christ that should come into the world. — Let no Unitarian suppose that these last words are pointed at *him;* that I suppose *he* has greater need of repentance than we have, because some special moral obliquity has prevented him from recognizing the truth of the incarnation. I had no such meaning. I was thinking much more of the orthodox. I was considering how many causes hinder *us* from confessing with our hearts as well as our lips, that Christ has come in the flesh. The conceit of our Orthodoxy is one cause. Whatever sets us in any wise above our fellow-men is an obstacle to a hearty belief in *the* Man: it must be taken from us before we shall really bow our knees to him. I know not that, if he were now walking visibly among us, he might not say that many a Unitarian was far nearer the kingdom of heaven than many of us; less choked with prejudice, less self-confident, more capable of recognizing the great

helper of the wounded man who has fallen among thieves, than we priests or Levites are, because more ready to go and do likewise. I cannot say that this might not be so; I often suspect that it would be so; and therefore I certainly did not intend to convey the impression that the moral disease at the root of their most vehement intellectual denials is necessarily a malignant one. . . . I am nearly sure that many Unitarians would sooner die than give up the act of prayer, and that they believe it not to be the falsest, but the truest, of all acts; that which is necessary to make them sincere, and keep them sincere. I do not doubt that the greater part of Unitarians, even those who retain Dr. Priestley's dogma of Necessity in their speculative creed, contrive to separate the idea of Him they call Father from that Necessity. They confess a Will: they do not worship a mere God of nature; and they can believe, that this Will may govern *them* in some different way from that in which he governs the trees and flowers and streams. — F. D. MAURICE: *Theological Essays*, pp. 11, 71–2, 88–9, 329; New York edition.

Additional testimonies to the high moral and intellectual character of Unitarians might have been introduced into this section; and some of these would have brought into notice other honored names, not yet mentioned. But the extracts which have been made are enough for our present purpose; which is to show, — without, we trust, a spirit of pride or of pharisaic boasting, — that Unitarianism numbers among its adherents some of the best and wisest of men that have ever lived; that, though frequently branded as blasphemers of the Saviour, the believers in the simple oneness of God have not been undistinguished, either as individuals or as a church, for their moral worth and sincere piety; that, though, in common with other classes of Dissenters in England, excluded from the highest seats of learning in that country, and sometimes spoken of in the United States and elsewhere as the merest sciolists, they have manifested, in the productions of their pen, no gross deficiency in either classical or scriptural knowledge; and that, though small in numbers as compared with the professors of orthodox views, they have in some instances displayed a philosophic skill and a poetical power which will for ever associate their names with those of the gifted few who have pre-eminently stood out as the improvers and leaders of a world's intellect, — the benefactors of their race. These testimonies are cited merely to prove, that, as respects the character and the attainments of Antitrinitarians, there is nothing which, judging *à priori*, should prevent an investigation into the evidence presented in favor of the opinions which they profess, and which many of them have adorned by their lives, and recommended in their writings. Similar observations will apply even with greater force to the extracts made in the following section.

SECT. IX. — UNITARIANS ENTITLED TO THE CHRISTIAN NAME.

A. — I honor and admire Caius for his great learning.

B. — The knowledge of the Sanscrit is an important article in Caius's learning.

A. — I have been often in his company, and have found no reason for believing this.

B. — Oh! then you deny his learning, are envious, and Caius's enemy.

A. — God forbid! I love and admire him. I know him for a transcendent linguist in the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and modern European languages; and, with or without the Sanscrit, I look up to him, and rely on his erudition in all cases in which I am concerned. And it is this perfect trust, this unfeigned respect, that is the appointed criterion of Caius's friends and disciples, and not their full acquaintance with each and all particulars of his superiority. S. T. COLERIDGE.

There is another thing which . . . my censurer, and others such as he, generally stand by; to wit, if a person be any thing ingenious, or more learned than ordinary, and writes out of the common road, he is presently a Socinian; as if all men of sense must needs turn Socinians. . . . If he will say that Socinus was mistaken in a great many things, I fully agree with him; but I can reckon up a great many worse errors than his, whereof I shall mention but one, out of respect to my censurer; that is, of those who think men deserve eternal torments, whom Christ never condemned; who by all means persecute those that differ from them, though they own themselves to be as liable to error as the very men whom they persecute; who, in a word, think they may, upon very slight suspicions, traduce men that are heartily devoted to Christianity, and sober in their lives, as a kind of plagues to be carefully shunned. He that does not ascribe to Christ what he thinks Christ never assumed to himself, if otherwise he perform constant obedience to all his precepts which he fully understands, may obtain the forgiveness of his ignorance from a most favorable and compassionate Judge; but he that breaks the command of loving his neighbor, which is as clear as the sun at noon-day, by slandering and bitterness and cruelty, and dies in those vices, shall never, unless a new gospel be made for him, be admitted into the kingdom of heaven. — LE CLERC: *Preface to his Supplement to Hammond; as quoted in the Unitarian Miscellany for February*, 1823.

It will appear that the several denominations of Christians agree both in the substance of religion, and in the necessary enforcements of the practice of it; that the world and all things were created by God, and are under the direction and government of his all-powerful

hand and all-seeing eye; that there is an essential difference between good and evil, virtue and vice; that there will be a state of future rewards and punishments, according to our behavior in this life; that Christ was a teacher sent from God, and that his apostles were divinely inspired; that all Christians are bound to declare and profess themselves to be his disciples; that not only the exercise of the several virtues, but also a belief in Christ, is necessary in order to their obtaining the pardon of sin, the favor of God, and eternal life; that the worship of God is to be performed chiefly by the heart, in prayers, praises, and thanksgiving; and, as to all other points, that they are bound to live by the rules which Christ and his apostles have left them in the Holy Scriptures. Here, then, is a fixed, certain, and uniform rule of faith and practice, containing all the most necessary points of religion established by a divine sanction, embraced as such by all denominations of Christians, and in itself abundantly sufficient to preserve the knowledge and practice of religion in the world. — BISHOP GIBSON: *Second Pastoral Letter*, pp. 20–1.

Unitarians acknowledge the truth of these primary principles, and are therefore entitled to the appellation of Christians.

Once I remember some narrow-minded people of his [Dr. DODDRIDGE'S] congregation gave him no small trouble on account of a gentleman in communion with the church, who was a professed Arian, and who otherwise departed from the common standard of orthodoxy. This gentleman they wished either to be excluded from the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, or to have his attendance upon it prevented; but the doctor declared, that he would sacrifice his place, and even his life, rather than fix any such mark of discouragement upon one who, whatever his doctrinal sentiments were, appeared to be a real Christian. — *Dr. Kippis, in Biographia Britannica*, vol. v. p. 307.

Some of the Unitarian doctrines do, indeed, appear to many of us extremely unscriptural; and yet it must be acknowledged, however wide of the truth these doctrines may be, there is a very great and essential difference between them and Deism. . . . However mistaken these people may be, yet, while they continue to own Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, support his cause in general as the cause of truth, and lead pious and virtuous lives, we should not deny them the honor of the Christian name, rank them among absolute infidels, and consign them to eternal perdition, as too many do. They have still a right to a place in our fraternal affection; and we should pity and pray

for them, and by all rational means endeavor to reclaim them, but by no means revile and persecute them, or even hurt a hair of their heads. — D. TURNER, of Abingdon: *Free Thoughts on Free Inquiry in Religion; apud Field's Letters*, p. 67.

We and the Socinians are said to differ; but about what? Not about morality or natural religion, or the divine authority of the Christian religion: we differ only about what we do not understand, and about what is to be done on the part of God. . . . A heathen Socrates, I think, would be surprised at those who agreed in so many things requiring declarations and subscriptions, in order to exclude one another. . . . . And my difficulty is increased, when I find that making this declaration [respecting the doctrine of the Trinity] separates me from Christians whom I must acknowledge to be rational and well informed; from those who have studied some parts of Scripture with singular success. — DR. JOHN HEY: *Lectures in Divinity*, vol. ii. pp. 41, 249.

I never attempted either to encourage or discourage his [the Duke of Grafton's] profession of Unitarian principles; for I was happy to see a person of his rank professing, with intelligence and with sincerity, Christian principles. If any one thinks that an Unitarian is not a Christian, I plainly say, without being myself an Unitarian, that I think otherwise. . . . . The Christian religion is wholly comprised in the New Testament; but men have interpreted that book in various ways, and hence have sprung up a great variety of Christian churches. I scruple not giving the name of Christian churches to assemblies of men uniting together for public worship, though they may differ somewhat from each other in doctrine and in discipline; whilst they all agree in the fundamental principle of the Christian religion, that Jesus is the Christ, the Saviour of the world. In this the Greek, the Latin, and all the reformed churches have one and the same faith. — BISHOP WATSON: *Life*, pp. 47, and 412–13.

Oh that I could prevail on Christians to melt down, under the warm influence of brotherly love, all the distinctions of Methodists, Independents, Baptists, Anabaptists, Trinitarians, Arians, Unitarians, in the glorious name of Christians; men of large, generous, benevolent minds, above disputing for trifles; men who love one another as men, sons of the same Almighty Parent, heirs of the same salvation by Jesus Christ! Let us throw away our petty badges of distinction; distinction, where, in fact, there is no difference; and let us walk together, hand in hand, into the church, up to the altar, and give and

forgive, and love one another, and live in unity in this world, the few years poor mortals have to live, that we may meet in love, never again to be divided, in heaven; where will no more be found the narrow, dark, cold, wretched prejudices of little sectaries, cavilling at each other, stinging their opponents, venting the virulence of their temper in defence of a religion that forbids, above every thing, all rancor, all malice, all evil-thinking, and all evil-speaking. — VICESIMUS KNOX: *Sermons; in Works*, vol. vi. p. 50.

With no ordinary pleasure have we made this extract from Dr. KNOX. It is fraught with "thoughts that breathe" a spirit of divine love, — with "words that burn" with all the fire of a catholic Christianity. These sentiments will not be deemed the less effective because they come from one who did not regard all opinions as of equal or of trifling importance, but who was a devoted admirer of the doctrines of the church of England, and who, as "a believer in the doctrine of the Trinity," lamented that Unitarians should, as he expresses it, "zealously lower our Saviour in the opinion of his followers." See Preface to his Sermons as published in 1792, pp. vi. and vii.

I am no Socinian, I am no Arian, whatever the malice of others may have suggested, or your own suspicions allowed. And while I love Jebb as a man, while I defend him as a scholar, while I will assist him if injured, and vote for him if attacked, I can yet distinguish between him and his principles, between the license of ambition or novelty and the honest zeal of the well-meaning Christian. — WILLIAM BENNET (before he became Bishop of Cloyne), *in Letter to Dr. Parr, dated Sept.* 18, 1770; *apud Parr's Works*, vol. vii. p. 77.

Though many of us differ from you [Dr. Priestley] in matters of religious faith, we trust that we have better learned the spirit of our excellent religion than not to esteem in you that character of piety and virtue which is the best fruit of every faith, and that ardor for truth and manly inquiry which Christianity invites, and which no form of Christianity ought to shrink from; as well as to admire those eminent abilities and that unwearied perseverance which give activity to the virtues of your heart, and to which, in almost every walk of science, your country and the world have been so much indebted. . . . Though your enemies have attacked you in that way wherein you feel perhaps most sensibly, yet we rejoice to find in you that decent magnanimity, that Christian bearing, which raises you superior to suffering; and that a regard to God, to truth, and to another world, have even from the bosom of affliction enabled you to extract a generous consolation. Whether in your religious inquiries you have erred or no, we firmly

believe that truth and the best interests of mankind have been the object of your constant regard; and we trust that that God who loves an honest and well-meaning heart will dispense to you such protection as to his wisdom may seem most fit. To his benevolent and fatherly protection we devoutly recommend you through the remainder of your life; praying that you may be long preserved, that you may survive the hatred of your ungrateful country, and that you may repay her cruel injuries, by adding, as you have hitherto done, to her treasure of science, of virtue, and of piety. — *Extract from Address to the Rev. Dr. Priestley; apud Yates's Vindication.*

This address was presented to Dr. Priestley by forty-three ministers of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, of the Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist persuasions, soon after the Birmingham riots in 1791, when the valuable property of that good and great man was destroyed, and his life endangered, by the outrages of a fanatical mob.

[1.] I shall ever think and ever speak of Mr. Wakefield as a very profound scholar, as a most honest man, and as a Christian who united knowledge with zeal, piety with benevolence, and the deep simplicity of a child with the fortitude of a martyr. . . . . [2.] He [Dr. James Lindsay] had fine talents; he had a good store of ancient learning; and of modern literature his knowledge was various, extended, and well digested. Then, as to his moral qualities, there, we can scarcely say too much. He was pure in heart, social in temper, benevolent in spirit, most upright in conduct. Some would say there was a sternness about his integrity; and a vehemence, almost passionate, in urging the right and opposing the wrong, as it appeared to him, in sentiment or action. But, in reality, there was all the sweetness, as well as all the fairness, of candor. In debate, if he was sometimes warm, he was never overbearing; if there was pressing earnestness, there was no discourtesy in his manner. As a patriot and a philanthropist, the love of his country and of his kind was in him a glowing passion, as well as a steady principle. As a Christian and a preacher, religion was in him a subject of ardent feeling, as well as of honest profession; and, though destitute of the graces of elocution, yet he possessed, in no inferior degree, all the eloquence which sincere conviction, vivid conceptions, strong emotions, and great command of language, can supply. . . . . [3.] *Extract from Letter to Archbishop Magee.* — And now, my Lord, we are come to a point, upon which unreservedly I shall state to you my disapprobation of some passages in your Charges. It pained me exceedingly to find that your Grace adopted the invidious,

and, I must say fairly, the uncharitable language of those persons who maintain that Socinians are not Christians. . . . Undisguisedly and indignantly, I shall ever bear testimony against the uncharitable spirit which excludes the followers of Socinus utterly from the catholic church of Christ. . . . Without professing any partiality for Unitarians, I hold that they who acknowledge Jesus Christ to be the promised Messiah, to have had a direct and special commission from the Almighty, to have been endowed supernaturally with the Holy Spirit, to have worked miracles, to have suffered on the cross, and on the third day to have risen from the dead, — yes, my Lord, I hold that men, thus believing, have a sacred claim to be called Christians. — DR. SAMUEL PARR.

The quotations marked [1] and [3] are from Parr's Works, vol. i. p. 402, and vol. vii. pp. 8–10; that marked [2] is from Field's Memoirs of Parr, vol. ii. p. 283.

Having always considered the favorable opinion of wise and good men as the best reward which, on this side of the grave, an honest individual can receive for doing what he deems to be his duty on all occasions, I cannot but be highly gratified by the approbation of so respectable a body of my fellow-Christians as those are, an address from whom has been this moment read to me. I am most certainly a very sincere, though a very humble, friend to the cause of religious liberty, and have uniformly been so from the first moment I was capable of distinguishing "quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non." . . . Revelation, I am sure, confirms this voice [of reason], . . . when it warmly expostulates with those who are fond of interfering in matters of conscience. . . . Let us, then, be content to leave our fellow-Christians to stand or fall by the judgment of our common Lord and Master, to whom both we and they must hereafter give an account; and, in the mean time, should we upon reflection regard it as a duty to convert others to our own peculiar opinions, let us never cease to remember that reason and argument are the only weapons of spiritual warfare. And, even in the use of these, we shall do well constantly to bear in mind, that revealed religion was graciously vouchsafed to man, "non disputandi causâ, sed ita vivendi." — HENRY BATHURST, Bishop of Norwich, *as quoted in the Unitarian Miscellany for February*, 1823.

This extract is made from a speech delivered by Bishop BATHURST, Oct. 3, 1822, in reply to an address presented to him by the Eastern Unitarian Society, thanking him for "his uniform attachment and marked devotion to the cause of religious liberty."

We see in the theology of Newton the very spirit and principle which gave all its stability and all its sureness to the philosophy of Newton. We see the same tenacious adherence to every one doctrine that had such valid proof to uphold it as could be gathered from the field of human experience; and we see the same firm resistance of every one argument that had nothing to recommend it but such plausibilities as could easily be devised by the genius of man, when he expatiated abroad on those fields of creation which the eye never witnessed, and from which no messenger ever came to us with any credible information. Now, it was on the former of these two principles that Newton clung so determinedly to his Bible, as the record of an actual annunciation from God to the inhabitants of this world. When he turned his attention to this book, he came to it with a mind tutored to the philosophy of facts; and, when he looked at its credentials, he saw the stamp and the impress of this philosophy on every one of them. He saw the fact of Christ being a Messenger from heaven, in the audible language by which it was conveyed from heaven's canopy to human ears. He saw the fact of his being an approved Ambassador of God, in those miracles which carried their own resistless evidence along with them to human eyes. . . . He saw the reality of that supernatural light which inspired the prophecies he himself illustrated, by such an agreement with the events of a various and distant futurity as could be taken cognizance of by human observation. He saw the wisdom of God pervading the whole substance of the written message, in such manifold adaptations to the circumstances of man, and to the whole secrecy of his thoughts and his affections and his spiritual wants and his moral sensibilities, as, even in the mind of an ordinary and unlettered peasant, can be attested by human consciousness. These formed the solid materials of the basis on which our experimental philosopher stood. . . . When I look at the steady and unmoved Christianity of this wonderful man, so far from seeing any symptom of dotage and imbecility, or any forgetfulness of those principles on which the fabric of his philosophy is reared, do I see, that, in sitting down to the work of a Bible commentator, he hath given us their most beautiful and most consistent exemplification. — DR. THOMAS CHALMERS: *Astronomical Discourses*, Disc. 2; *in Select Works*, vol. iv. pp. 375–6.

In his Preface, where he endeavors to qualify this eloquent panegyric on Newton as an interpreter of the Bible, Dr. CHALMERS admits, what some have unreasonably denied, that that great philosopher was a Unitarian.

Dr. George Benson was a man of great piety and learning, intensely studious, and unwearied in his researches after theological truth, which was the principal business of his life. On all occasions he was a zealous advocate for free inquiry and the right of private judgment; but, though his integrity was unquestioned, yet the freedom with which he expressed his sentiments on some points controverted amongst Christians, exposed him to censures and indecent reflections from men of little candor and contracted views. . . . . Dr. Samuel Chandler in a few years became alike a Christian, and a classical, biblical, and oriental scholar. He had long been the subject of a very painful disorder, which he bore with the piety and fortitude of a Christian. His remains were attended by many eminent ministers, who during his life appreciated his merits, and at his death paid him those honors which his virtues and piety so justly deserved. . . . . In the controversy which unhappily raged in 1718 on the Trinitarian question, Dr. James Foster adopted the Arian creed. His integrity was unimpeached, and he was a decided Nonconformist. His popularity as a preacher is said to have been well supported by a fine commanding voice, accompanied with an intrepidity in avowing his sentiments, which all ought to imitate. Error is never more dangerous than when it walks in disguise. He was unjustly charged with Deism by some who could not distinguish between his negative creed and complete infidelity. He ever protested that he was a firm believer in revelation, and despised the meanness of professing Christianity without conviction. . . . . Dr. Nathaniel Lardner was an upright and devout Christian. From the time he enlisted in the cause of Christianity, he was a faithful and sincere champion, and defended its cause with great seriousness and solemnity. — Abridged from WILLIAM JONES, M. A., Author of the History of the Waldenses: ***Christian Biography, a Dictionary of the Lives and Writings of the most distinguished Christians***, pp. 37, 105–6, 161–2, 270.

In this Biography of distinguished Christians, Mr. JONES includes many other Unitarians than those mentioned in the preceding extracts.

The first point to be considered by those who meditate the project of re-union is its practicability. Those who are disposed to assert it will observe the number of important articles of religious faith in which all Christians are agreed, and the proportionally small number of those in which any Christians disagree. All Christians believe, that, 1. There is one God; 2. That he is a Being of infinite perfection;

3. That he directs all things by his providence; 4. That it is our duty to love him with all our hearts, and our neighbors as ourselves; 5. That it is our duty to repent of the sins we commit; 6. That God pardons the truly penitent; 7. That there is a future state of rewards and punishment, when all mankind shall be judged according to their works; 8. That God sent his Son into the world to be its Saviour, the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him; 9. That he is the true Messiah; 10. That he taught, worked miracles, suffered, died, and rose again, as is related in the Four Gospels; 11. That he will hereafter make a second appearance on the earth, raise all mankind from the dead, judge the world in righteousness, bestow eternal life on the virtuous, and punish the workers of iniquity. In the belief of these articles, all Christians — Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, Quakers, Anabaptists, and Socinians — are agreed. — CHARLES BUTLER: *Reminiscences*, pp. 200–1.

I dare not hesitate to avow my regret that any scheme of doctrines or tenets should be the subject of penal law. . . . It is the manner, the means, that constitute the crime. The merit or demerit of the opinions themselves depends on their originating and determining causes, which may differ in every different believer, and are certainly known to Him alone who commanded us, "Judge not, lest ye be judged." . . . Judging by all that we can pretend to know or are entitled to infer, who among us will take on himself to deny that the late Dr. Priestley was a good and benevolent man, as sincere in his love, as he was intrepid and indefatigable in his pursuit, of truth? . . . Persuaded that the doctrines enumerated in pp. 229–30, are not only essential to the Christian religion, but those which contradistinguish the religion as Christian, I merely assert this persuasion in another form, when I assert, that, in my sense of the word "Christian," Unitarianism is not Christianity. But do I say that those who call themselves Unitarians are not Christians? God forbid! I would not think, much less promulgate, a judgment at once so presumptuous and so uncharitable. — SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE: *Aids to Reflection; in Works*, vol. i. pp. 237–9.

Sentiments of a similar kind will be found in Biographia Literaria (Works, vol. iii. pp. 593–4), where COLERIDGE, forgetting his "Confessio Fidei" of 1816 (Works, vol. v. p. 17), indignantly contradicts the charge of his having denied Unitarians to be Christians. From the orthodox point of view, this eminent writer could not reasonably be expected to look on Unitarianism as Christianity; and it would be equally unreasonable to expect, that from an opposite and what we would call a more evangelical

stand-point, the believer in the doctrine of the simple Unity of God could regard Trinitarianism, in its essential features and its ecclesiastical aspect, in any other light than as a relic of Heathenism. But it does not follow, that, because they hold each other's opinions to be in a great degree hostile to the truths inculcated in Scripture, the Unitarian and the Trinitarian must necessarily think, one of the other, that he is altogether devoid of Christian principle, Christian faith, Christian affection; that it is impossible for him to love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, or to trust in him as the Messiah and the Redeemer, "whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world."

I know very well that my learned friend will probably here say, "I do not admit the Unitarian to be a Christian;" but I am not obliged to listen to such explanation on the part of my learned friend. If the Unitarian be not a Christian, it is in consequence of that prerogative with which my learned friend gratuitously invests him, namely, the right of interpreting the Bible for himself, spurning the authority of the church of ages, which teaches us that Christ is both God and man. It is utterly useless for my friend to tell me the Unitarian is not sincere and Christian. What! proscribe all the Unitarians in England; men of splendid and commanding genius; men of conscience and honor; men of integrity and truth; men who live and die — die actually with the persuasion that Christ is mere man, and "Intercessor" — who believe in God most firmly! Is it just, is it honorable, to say they are not Christians, when it is his very system, the system which he himself recommends, that has caused their unchristianization? Oh, it is really unfair! it is decidedly unkind, ungenerous, and unfair on the part of my learned friend, or on the part of any clergyman of the church of England or Scotland. — MR. FRENCH, a Catholic Barrister: *Discussion between him and the Rev. J. Cumming, at Hammersmith, in* 1840; p. 482.

So long as the main sentiment is unexceptionable, we do not think it necessary to point out, in all cases, the minor points in which we differ from an author quoted; but we may take the opportunity to remark, that Mr. FRENCH greatly errs, when, in eulogizing English Unitarians, he says it is their persuasion that Christ is "mere man." Leaving out of view such persons as are termed Rationalists or Transcendentalists, we know of no one belonging to the Unitarian denomination, either in Great Britain or in America, who would employ such a phrase. It may, however, have been used to imply only that many Unitarians have regarded Jesus in nature as a human being, and not an angel or a God; but the expression is calculated to mislead, as if Humanitarians thought that the well-beloved of the Father was merely a common or an undistinguished man, or, at the most, one of the old Hebrew prophets.

An Unitarian, as such, is a Christian; that is, if a man follows Christ's law, and believes his words according to his conscientious sense of their meaning, he is a Christian; and though I may think he understands Christ's words amiss, yet that is a question of interpretation, and no more. The purpose of his heart and mind is to obey and be guided by Christ, and therefore he is a Christian. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Letter* 158; *in Life and Correspondence*, p. 299.

When I look at the reception, by the Unitarians, both of the Old and New Testament, I cannot, for my part, strongly as I dislike their theology, deny to those who acknowledge the basis of divine fact the name of Christian. Who, indeed, is justified in denying the title to any one who professes to love Christ in sincerity? — BISHOP HAMPDEN, *apud London Inquirer for December* 4, 1847.

No man has a right to call himself a Christian, if he be not a Christian in the ordinary acceptation of the word, — if he do not, for example, believe that Jesus Christ really rose from the dead, according to the Scriptures. This common acceptation of the term "Christian" will, indeed, include many who hold what appear to us very false notions of Christianity; as, for instance, the Unitarians. But we must take language as we find it. The true meaning of a word is what is commonly understood by it; neither more nor less. . . . So it is with the word "Christian." We are not justified in denying that title to an Unitarian, on the ground that he denies what we hold as an essential doctrine of Christianity. Nor would a Roman Catholic be justified in refusing it to all but members of what he regards as the only true church; or a Baptist, to all except those whom he considers really baptized persons. . . . A Christian — whatever any one may conceive the word ought to mean — does mean, in ordinary speech, neither more nor less than one who regards Jesus Christ as the founder of his religion, and as coming from God. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Cautions for the Times*, pp. 498–9.

In pp. 492–3, this master of language and of logic proves — what but for the exclusiveness of some religionists would require no proof — that "to whatever extent any one has embraced Christianity, his religion is evangelical."

I have heard it once and again affirmed that Unitarians are not Christians; and some, in their unreflecting zeal, — some even of those whom I sincerely respect, — have gone so far as to call Socinianism a half-way house towards infidelity; forgetting that a half-way house, from the nature of the thing, *ex vi termini*, must be as well from as

towards, — either to infidelity, or from infidelity to Christianity; and, accordingly I have known eminent converts from the superstitions of the East who were Socinians. But when misguided men, of more zeal than knowledge, would thus distinguish the Unitarian from the Christian, whom, I will ask, do we fondly cite as our highest authorities when we are engaged in defending our religion against its infidel adversaries? In arguing with these upon the evidences, how often has one said, "What better would you have than that which satisfied the greatest masters of science, the great luminaries of law? Who was ever a better judge of legal evidence than Hale; of moral evidence than Locke; of mathematical and physical evidence than Newton?" And yet Locke at one time labored under grave suspicion of Unitarianism, — groundless, perhaps, though he was at the least an Arian. But that Newton was a Unitarian is quite certain, . . . as thorough a Unitarian as ever attended Essex-street Chapel. My noble and learned friend (Lord Campbell) will find this clearly proved by Sir David Brewster from examination of the Newton manuscripts, which, that learned person says, leave not the shadow of a doubt upon the subject. Your Lordships, indeed, are not Unitarians: I question if there be one in this House. Certainly there have been, — the Duke of Grafton and others: with them we may not agree; but assuredly their errors are not to be corrected by denying that Sir Isaac Newton was a Christian, or Dr. Lardner — he to whose writings the defence of our religion owes so great an obligation, that they form a large proportion, nay the very foundation, of Dr. Paley's celebrated work. With these eminent men you may differ; you may keep aloof as wide as you will from them; but it is not by denying the Christianity of Newton and Lardner that you can turn Socinians aside from their track. Neither of their heresies nor of far greater than theirs, have I the least dread. I have no alarm for the truth, — no fear of error. Let truth be left to the attacks of its enemies, error to the care of its friends, and I have no apprehension of the result. But one thing I do fear; one thing does alarm me; and that is persecuted error. — LORD BROUGHAM, *in a Speech on National Education, delivered in the House of Lords, Aug.* 4, 1854; *reported in Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, third series, vol. cxxxv. p. 1313–14.

Lord CAMPBELL merely rose to express his disapproval of the manner in which, as his noble and learned friend had said, the Unitarians had been persecuted. He (Lord CAMPBELL) was not aware that Sir Isaac Newton was a Socinian: he had always believed him to have

been an Arian. He believed, however, that the Socinians numbered among themselves many men of good education, of great attainments, and of irreproachable lives. Though this sect labored under what he conceived to be a lamentable error, still they were Christians, and ought to be treated as such. Until the repeal of the statutes of William III., Socinians had labored under various disabilities, and were not entitled to all the privileges of the Act of Uniformity: but now they were placed on the same footing as the other religious sects; and, though hoping that they might see their error, he yet trusted, that, while they continued in their error, they would be treated as Christian brethren, and not, as they had been, as something worse than infidels. — *Hansard's Report of* LORD CAMPBELL'S *Reply to Lord Brougham*.

Lords BROUGHAM and CAMPBELL mistake when they draw a line of distinction between Arians and Unitarians, by restricting the latter name to those whom they, as well as many others, call Socinians. An Arian believes in the pre-existence of Christ, as a being inferior to God; a Socinian, or rather a Humanitarian, rejects the doctrine of Christ's pre-existence, and, while regarding him as the highest representative of Deity and as the appointed Saviour of the world, thinks that he was in nature only a man. But both are Unitarians, because they agree in holding the doctrine of God's strict or simple Unity, and the unqualified subordination of the Lord Jesus to the one God and Father of all. It will be seen, however, that our correction does not in the least diminish the force of the remarks made by Lords BROUGHAM and CAMPBELL as to the religious standing of the denomination to which they refer.

The denial of the Divinity of Christ is undoubtedly a great error; and an error which, if admitted, leads to many other great and injurious errors. But it is as undoubtedly the error of many noble and ingenuous minds, and of many devout and earnest Christians. . . . Grotius, Le Clerc, and Wetstein, in Holland; and Whiston, Samuel Clarke, Lardner, Locke, Newton, and Milton, in England, — are all reckoned among the rejecters of the Supreme Divinity of Christ. A list of more illustrious names and more eminent Christians could hardly be found. — LEICESTER A. SAWYER: *Organic Christianity*, pp. 408–9, 445.

The only remark which it seems necessary to make on Mr. SAWYER'S liberal sentiments is, that, though the comments of Grotius and Le Clerc on many passages of Scripture are consonant with the interpretations usually laid down by Unitarians, these distinguished writers were professedly Trinitarian in their views, and defended themselves from the charges of Antitrinitarianism preferred by some of their contemporaries against them.

This ["Memoir of Mary L. Ware"] is a beautiful life of a beautiful character. The character was not beautiful in the romantic incidents of an existence diversified by strange adventures, or by the fascinations that gather around a splendid career in society; but it was beautiful, if self-sacrifice, consistency, cheerfulness, and security can make a beautiful Christian character. . . . It [the Memoir] is a beautiful pendant to the charming life of her beloved husband. We commend it most cordially to our readers, as a firm example of what a true Christian woman should aim to become. The ethics of the gospel are here exhibited in their true spirit of self-devotion and self-forgetfulness. We could wish that many who profess a sounder and more consistent creed adorned their course by a character and a life half as consistent as were those of Mrs. Ware. — *New Englander for August*, 1853; vol. xi. (new series, vol. v.) pp. 477–8.

In concluding a chapter, the materials for which have been gathered to show that the spirit of Sectarianism is inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, and whose tendency is to exhibit a truth which Christendom has been slow to learn, — that the church of Christ is not confined within the precincts either of Roman Catholicism or of any one of the various Protestant denominations, but is co-extensive with the sincere, the good, the pure, and the truth-loving, of every name, who profess to believe in God and his Messiah, and who, whether they be few or many, meet together for purposes of worship and instruction, — it may not be inappropriate to make some remarks on the title "Christian," which has been denied by a majority of orthodox believers to those who differ from them in opinion, but which, as exemplified in these pages, not a few of them have, in a spirit of candor and liberality, applied, both individually and generally, to Unitarians.

This word, "Christian," whether as a noun or an adjective, occurs, as well in books as in conversation, with various and different significations.

1. It is sometimes used to distinguish a people or nation whose religion is ostensibly that which was taught by Christ, from those nations whose opinions as to the proper objects of faith and worship have been taken from other real or supposed divine Messengers. Thus we speak of a Mohammedan country, when we mean to imply, not that each and all of its inhabitants are faithful to the code of Mohammed, but merely that his religion has, to a very considerable extent, moulded the belief, the character, and the usages of the people. So also we speak of a Christian country, meaning by this phrase that Christianity is more or less blended with its government, laws, and institutions; affects the state of society and of civilization manifested by all classes and orders within its bounds; and holds a certain undefinable authority over their faith, morals, and habits. But it is obvious that this mode of employing the term is exceedingly loose. For, in every such coun-

try there are, unhappily, many but little subject to the principles which Jesus inculcated,— as the professors of other religions, the professors of none at all, the indifferent and the reckless, the abandoned and the ignorant, the inmates of the prison or the workhouse, of whom some have scarcely heard the name of God or Christ, unless when associated with profanity; to say nothing of the prevalence of passions and practices among the professors of Christianity themselves,— the spirit of war, the craft of merchandise, the bane of intemperance, the zeal of partisanship in religion and politics, and the curse of despotism or of slavery. But, though occasionally used in this vague and inaccurate sense, startling the thoughtful mind by the contrasts which it awakens, the term is unambiguous, and serves the purpose for which it is employed.

2. The word "Christian" is also sometimes used to point out an individual, of any religious persuasion, whether he be a Mohammedan, a Jew, or a Pagan, who is distinguished from other men by the excellence of his moral character, so marked in his conduct as to resemble, though unintentionally, the exhibitions of the benevolent spirit in Christ. In this sense the term was applied by some of the early Fathers to the virtuous sages of antiquity. But it is quite evident that only by a figure of speech can it be said of one who lived before the time of Christ, or who has never heard of his name, that he is a disciple of Christ, or a Christian, no matter how nearly he may approximate to Jesus in his spirit and pursuits.

3. The most common signification of the term is that according to which it is made to denote a person who assents to certain dogmas of a particular branch of Christ's church, that are called, by way of distinction, "sound" or "orthodox." To this use of the word there are strong objections. It is too narrow in its comprehension, too vague and shifting in its import. It has its root in spiritual pride and uncharitable judgment; and its pestiferous breath would blast some of the holiest affections that grace domestic and social life. Every church, and every individual member of it, have an equal claim to call their opinions orthodox, and to regard those which are opposite as heretical or heterodox; and, if the element of dogmatic soundness enter into the import of the Christian name, all churches and all individuals avowing the religion of Jesus must have respectively a right to restrict this name to themselves, and to withhold it from others. And what would be the result but a war of words, burning zeal, and damnatory denunciations,— the very antipodes to the whole aim and intent of Christianity? What the result has been is already told in the domination of the Romish church, and in the petty sectarianisms which have so often rent asunder the bonds of love and communion between Protestants.

4. A less frequent, but a more liberal, sense of the term "Christian" is its application to any one who, whatever may be his peculiar conception of the doctrines of Christianity, admits the divine or supernatural mission of its Founder. The word occurs only three times in the New Testament, Acts xi. 26; xxvi. 28. 1 Pet. iv. 16; and, with the exception of Peter, does not seem to have been used by any of the apostles. Words however, of a

similar import are often met with; as, "disciples," "believers," "brethren," "saints," "the elect," &c.; and, being applied indiscriminately to all who confessed the name of Christ, though they differed in moral deportment and in some doctrinal points, must have been employed to denote rather their obligation to be holy in their lives, and faithful to their professions, than to indicate the purity and spirituality of their characters, or the orthodoxy of their opinions. As soon as a Jew or a Heathen acknowledged by baptism Jesus to be the Messiah or the Son of God, he was admitted amongst the band of disciples or saints, without any questions being asked as to the precise nature of his belief; and, in correspondence with this practice among the apostles, the Unitarian Locke and the Trinitarian Whately would regard as Christians all who openly acknowledge the divine authority of Jesus.

5. It is obvious that the use of the term "Christian," in the sense just mentioned, — namely, in its application to all professing churches and members of Christ, — would preclude much of that curious cavilling as to the belief of our fellow-men, and that unjustifiable prying into the depths of their hearts, which have always marked the conduct and demeanor of sectarians. But there is another and a more accurate use of the term, when it is employed to indicate one who not only admits the supernatural and miraculous origin of Christianity, but who manifests in his conversation and life the moral dispositions which Jesus prescribed and exemplified. If *he* may be called a Christian who publicly acknowledges his belief in Christ and his obligation to live in conformity with that profession, surely the man who not only "names the name of Christ," but who "departs from iniquity," — who not only calls him "Lord and Master," but, with a heart full of love and reverence towards him, does what the great Messenger of Heaven commanded, is a disciple of Christ, a true Christian. All such men, whatever may be the complexion of their creed, are the real members of Christ's church. They are the saints of the earth, — the elect of God, for whom Jesus has gone to prepare a place in the mansions of his Father. Both this and the preceding sense of the term "Christian" is countenanced by some of the able and catholic writers from whom we have quoted; and we cannot doubt, that, despite of sectarian influences, many will be glad to do the same justice to those who, "after the way which is called heresy, worship the God of their fathers."

6. There is still another sense in which the term "Christian" may, we think, be used; but its correctness will probably be denied by almost all members of orthodox churches, and be acknowledged by only a few Unitarians. We mean that sense in which the word is employed to represent a man who, whether he holds or does not hold Christianity to be a supernatural revelation, professes to regard Jesus Christ as pre-eminently his Master and Teacher in all matters of religion, and who shows by his discourse and his actions, that he has imbibed the spirit of the best and wisest One amongst the good and the wise of all nations and all times. We do not sympathize with the views of those who would banish the miraculous

from Christ and Christianity, and place Jesus merely among, or even at the head of, the class of philosophers and reformers who have been raised up by Providence to enlighten or instruct the race. We believe, that, in his offices and his character, he stands immeasurably above the Socrates, the Platos, and the Zoroasters, good and great as they may have been; and that he received from the Being who sent him influences of a special kind to become — what no other has shown that he could become — the Redeemer of the world. Were we to reject the peculiarly divine element of the Gospels, we fear that we should be unable to admit the surpassing moral beauty and the godlike majesty of Christ's character, bound up as it seems to be indissolubly with the truthfulness of the wondrous tale; and should be ready to exclaim, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." We should feel that the doubts and the speculations which had shaken our faith in the unmeasured inspiration of Christ had taken away the grounds for belief in his pre-eminent graces, — had taken away the Logos of God from the soul of the great Nazarene, — had taken away all those attributes which made Jesus at once the Representative, the Image, the incarnate Son of God, and the type of a divine or perfected humanity, — had taken away that depth of affection which wept at the tomb of Lazarus, and gave back a living brother to the arms of affectionate sisters, — taken away that voice of wisdom, which, flowing from the bosom of the infinite Father, through the Son of his love, spoke of life and immortality in tones of authority unused by Hebrew seer or Grecian sage, — taken away all the power and glory of that resurrection which was the pledge of Christ's truth, the reward of his sacrificing love, and the gate of his entrance to the realms of heaven, to the right hand of God, where he still acts on man's behalf, still implores a Father's mercy on an erring and a sinful world; — that these doubts and speculations had taken away the substance of our Lord, and changed it into a shadow; that they had anatomized the breathing reality of Jesus, and converted it into a myth.

But we speak of our *own* feelings and convictions, not of those experienced by other minds. If, without his miracles, men *can* believe in Christ, let us rejoice; if, unable to recognize a voice from heaven at the baptism of Jesus, or to see a divine arm open his tomb and bring him forth, they can, notwithstanding, regard him as their Lord and Master, let us not refuse them his blessed name; if, while bigots frown and even the charitable shake their heads, the Rationalist sincerely obeys the behests of the Son of Mary, though he may doubt his claims as the divinely inspired Messiah, let us not forbid him "because he followeth not us," but be thankful for what faith he has, and, in a spirit of Christian kindness and unfeigned affection, try to win him to the blessing pronounced on the confession, "Thou art Jesus, the Son of God."

CHAPTER II.

THE PRECIOUSNESS OF THEOLOGICAL TRUTH, AND THE UNRESTRICTED MEANS OF ACQUIRING IT.

SECT. I. — THE IMPORTANCE OF RIGHT CONCEPTIONS OF RELIGION.

Loving truth
And wisdom for their own divinest selves.
P. J. Bailey.

In the preceding chapter, it was our aim to show, by the assistance of eminent writers in the ranks of the Orthodox, that the spirit which has been so often manifested by the professed disciples of Jesus towards one another, — the spirit of narrowness, of denunciation, and of persecution, — is wholly alien to the genius and the objects of Christianity; that, however it may disguise itself, whether in the garb of superior sanctity, of soundness of faith, or of a zeal for the cause of Heaven, this rampant spirit is at war with God's paternal character, with Christ's merciful message, and with man's best and noblest interests. We trust, however, that the sentiments contained in that chapter, while tending to deepen in the soul of the reader a love for his brethren of all theological denominations, may not have a deadening effect on his appreciation of the value of truth, as if it were of no importance whether a man's conceptions of religion be correct or otherwise. It certainly was not the intention of these writers to foster any such indifference in the minds of others; for many of them have been remarkable for their love of knowledge, and for their zeal in diffusing what they believed to be the doctrines of the gospel. Indeed, there is, and can be, no dissonance between the broadest views of the rights of our brethren in Christ, and the most devoted reverence for truth; though the cant of liberality may sometimes be heard from the lips of men who "care for none of these things;" who pay as little respect to those great principles of religion which are acknowledged by all professing Christians, as to the forms and dogmas which separate them into classes and parties. So far from there being any opposition between catholicity of feeling and a desire to possess and to spread right apprehensions of the nature of Christianity, that the most earnest inquirers after truth are of all men found to be the least acrimonious towards those who differ from them, because, in their investigations, they have had most need to practise such virtues as are conducive to charitable dispositions; and because, from their observation and their own

experience, they are the best cognizant of the various influences which tend inevitably to the production of variety of opinion. So also the true lover of his kind, the follower of peace, the friend of universal religious freedom, the opposer of all kinds of persecution, the member of Christ's catholic church, — who recognizes the disciples of Christ in the sincere, the good, and the humble-minded of all denominations, — will, if he be consistent with the principles from which his charity flows and takes its power, embrace every proper means for the diffusion of sentiments calculated to produce harmony and love among the various members of society. Knowing that the harsh thoughts, the bad tempers, and the unfeeling and condemnatory judgments of Christians, so called, have originated in their ignorance of the benign doctrines of the gospel, or rather in their forgetfulness of these amid their vain wranglings about matters which they do not understand or which cannot be understood, he will be led to disseminate what he regards as evangelical truth; he will recommend, in his conversation and his life, if he cannot by the aid of the pulpit or the press, those principles which constitute the chief elements of Christianity, — the fatherhood of God, and the fraternity of man; the intrinsic worth of a soul made in the image of its Creator; the ruin effected in its constitution by the ravages of sin; the possibility of its recovery to a state of holiness, and of reconciliation to a Father's favor, through the at-one-ment which he who labored and died for the good of all, offers to those who, truly repentant, strive, with the energy of renewed and devoted wills, to become Christ-like in their submission to God; Christ-like in the piety, the purity, the benevolence, of their hearts and lives.

No service is more acceptable to God, and no conduct can be more pious or praiseworthy, than to aim at truth, and to acquire its transforming influence; and, being once attempted, the labor will become so delightful that it will never be relinquished. The knowledge of any truth is pleasant; but the knowledge of Christian truth is singularly beneficial. — MELANCTHON; *in Cox's Life of Melancthon*, p. 92.

Abhor all doctrines which blaspheme or dishonor the name of God, and would blemish and hide the glory of his majesty. I give you this rule for your own preservation, and not in imitation of uncharitable firebrands and dividers of the church, to exercise your pride and imperious humor, in condemning all men to whose opinions you can maliciously affix a blasphemous consequence, which either followeth but in your own imagination, or is not acknowledged, but hated, by those on whom you do affix it. Let it suffice you to detest false doctrines, without detesting the persons that you imagine guilty of them, who profess to believe the contrary truth as steadfastly as you yourselves. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Christian Directory; in Practical Works*, vol. ii. p. 437.

To have right apprehensions of God is the great foundation of all religion; for, according as men's notions of God are, such will their religion be. If men have gross and false conceptions of God, their religion will be absurd and superstitious. If men fancy God to be an ill-natured Being, armed with infinite power, — one that delights in the misery and ruin of his creatures, and is ready to take all advantages against them, — they may fear him, but they will hate him; and they will be apt to be such towards one another as they fancy God to be towards them; for all religion doth naturally incline men to imitate him whom they worship. — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermon 5; in Works*, vol. i. p. 101.

Truth is in all things so worthy and desirable, that a generous spirit will think he can never prize it enough. We see the greatest men have made it the whole business of their lives to pursue it even in the smallest instances, and have thought their labors worthily rewarded, if, with the greatest application, and it may be with some danger and loss too, they have but been able to find it out at the last. — ARCHBISHOP WAKE: *Sermons and Discourses*, p. 235.

To ascertain the character of the Supreme Author of all things; to know, as far as we are capable of comprehending such a subject, what is his moral disposition, what the situation we stand in towards him, and the principles by which he conducts his administration, — will be allowed by every considerate person to be of the highest consequence. Compared to this, all other speculations or inquiries sink into insignificance, because every event that can befall us is in his hands, and by his sentence our final condition must be fixed. To regard such an inquiry with indifference is the mark, not of a noble but of an abject mind, which, immersed in sensuality or amused with trifles, deems itself unworthy of eternal life. . . . . As it [morality] is the genuine fruit of just and affecting views of divine truth, you will never sever it from its parent stock, nor indulge the fruitless hope of leading men to holiness, without strongly imbuing them with the spirit of the gospel. Truth and holiness are in the Christian system so intimately allied, that the warm and faithful inculcation of the one lays the only foundation for the other. . . . . Let us cultivate the most cordial esteem for all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Let us anxiously guard against that asperity and contempt which have too often mingled with theological debates; but let us aim, at the same time, to acquire and retain the most accurate conceptions of religious truth. Every improvement in the knowledge of Christ and the

mysteries of the gospel will abundantly compensate for the labor and attention necessary to its attainment. — ROBERT HALL: *Works*, vol. i. pp. 121–2, 146; vol. ii. p. 448.

Almost all men are forced to feel and acknowledge, that we ourselves, and the whole world we see about us, depend on some superhuman Cause or Power which has a control over us, and from which our happiness or misery comes. Now, the notions men form of such superhuman powers, the feelings they entertain towards them, and the course of behavior springing from such notions and feelings, — these are what we call religion; the superhuman powers, real or imaginary, being called the objects of religion. You will readily perceive, then, that men's religions will be different, according as the objects of their religion are different. If a man worships a Being whom he thinks good, but not all-knowing, he will often be satisfied with trying to appear good, without becoming so. If he worships one whom he thinks spiteful, he will try to appease his malice by doing injury and inflicting pain on himself and others. If he worships one whom he does not think all-powerful, he will be apt sometimes to neglect his service for that of some other power, if there seem to be a chance of gaining any thing by the change. If a man thinks his deity vain, he will try to flatter him; if weakly compassionate, to move his pity by doleful lamentations and complaints. In short, as the behavior of a family will be influenced by the character of the master of the house, so the religion of men will be influenced by the character which they suppose to be that of the Being whom they worship. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Cautions for the Times*, pp. 70–1.

One great end of a true education is to discipline the mind for the candid and unprejudiced pursuit of truth. It teaches the honest Christian to renounce all pious fraud, and not to think that it can ever be for God's glory that we should lie for him. Moreover, it teaches that it is for the interest of all to know the truth, and that it is a duty to be faithful to it at any sacrifice of reputation or property, or personal ease and enjoyment. It also recognizes the truth which is taught by the structure of the human mind, by the material universe, and by providence, as a part of the revelation which God has made to man as really as the Bible, and does not feel at liberty to suppress any truth taught by God. — DR. EDWARD BEECHER: *Conflict of Ages*, p. 360.

The search after and discovery of truth is one of the secrets of exalted happiness; and therefore shall we always find that those who are in reality the wisest and best are most impelled to communicate

their knowledge to the widest ranks. . . . . Divine truth is the primary want of the human soul, the ground of its own emancipation, and the means of its triumph over all outward foes. The full expansion and complete donation of this highest gift God has reserved to the ultimate energies of Christian doctrine on all mankind. All virtue is the inimitable fruit of truth; and the gospel is worthy of all acceptation, because the excellence it produces is the most veracious and enduring. . . . . This omnipotence and ineffable glory of truth is vouchsafed to man only for the purpose of promoting practical godliness. All its emanations are infinitely superior to the inertness of mere dogmas, since they are designed to make man both politically energetic and morally regenerative. . . . It is truth to be proclaimed, not simply as theological doctrine, but a mighty and saving revelation, a celestial fact free for all, which ought to interfuse every thought we think, adorn every deed we do, and be allowed unobstructedly to grow, less as a mere luxury of the intellect than the mightiest passion of the heart. — E. L. MAGOON: *Republican Christianity*, pp. 320, 353, 366.

There is another reason why we should not voluntarily suffer any form of error to attach itself to the doctrines of Christianity, and go forth under their sanction, to which I would briefly allude. However harmless, or beneficial even, such error may for a time appear, it is sure in the end to work mischief. Like the little book of the angel in the Apocalypse, though sweet in the mouth, it will make the belly bitter. Even though its direct influence on the heart and the life be not prejudicial, it will prove an obstacle in the way of the general reception of the doctrine with which it is associated. To the sincere and earnest inquirer after truth, it becomes a stumbling-block; while, to the enemies of our holy religion, it serves as a mark for the direction of their shafts. The Christian minister, who, by his eloquence and fervid zeal, spreads erroneous doctrines through the churches, does more to harm Christianity than a hundred infidels. Besides furnishing its adversaries with their most potent weapons against it, he is himself scattering broadcast the seeds from which scepticism and unbelief will, sooner or later, spring up. . . . . I think it not difficult to see how generally received error, here, may exert an influence upon thoughtful minds greatly to be deprecated. Let us suppose a man whose ideas of the character and government of God have been formed chiefly from the observation of his works. . . . Tell him that the object of the Divine Being, in creating the world, was the illustration of his own

attributes, and not the good of his creatures; that he forms and makes use of them in whatever way may best subserve that end, wholly ignoring any claim which they might be supposed to have upon him as their Creator. And, to complete and give consistency to this view of the divine character and government, add a discourse on the glory of God, and the joy of his saints in the sufferings of the finally lost, — sufferings which he had predetermined, and rendered escape from impossible. Let all this, I say, be told to a man such as I have supposed, and what effect would it be likely to have on him? If he received it as the simple teaching of the Scriptures, might it not lead him to question their authority? Would it be strange if his confidence in them, as a revelation from Heaven, should be shaken by it? — PROF. GEORGE I. CHACE, LL.D.: *The Relation of Divine Providence to Physical Laws*, pp. 51, 53, 55.

It is beyond dispute, we suppose, that the opinions of men lie at the root of their characters. All beliefs, — living beliefs, of course, we mean, — beliefs that are honestly and heartily held, that are more than hypotheses and speculations and passive consents, — work and are productive. Their sap circulates in every part of the man, and puts forth the leaves and flowers of correspondent sentiments and habits. Hence there is no form of doctrine that has not its own style of religion, — a style that is not arbitrary or fortuitous, but the genuine offspring of its source, and showing its parentage in its qualities. A creed is a die; and living men are the coinage, and show, in the image and superscription they bear, the impress of its face. If it does not impress itself, and multiply living copies in the sphere it fills, it is dead: it is only so many words, not alive by being taken up into a living human spirit, and held by its grasp into such close contact with its substance as to have opportunity to stamp its mark upon the yielding mass. The mixed multitude that hang upon the skirts of any form of doctrine, and are content to wear its name and livery, are not believers. The probability is that they do not know what it is intellectually; and, if they do, they keep it too far from them to feel its power. But beliefs, real, genuine, sincere beliefs, are powerful. The human soul is in their hands like wax; and the life, in its prevailing sentiments and ways, is the seal that testifies at once the pressure and the conformation. False beliefs will make false lives, some pretence of goodness, which is not a real goodness, but a fault sanctified by the authority of religion. — *Church Review for April*, 1854; vol. vii p. 73.

SECT. II. — THE RIGHT AND DUTY OF FREE INQUIRY.

The inquiry of truth is the sovereign good of human nature. — LORD BACON.
Study earnestly; learn willingly; resist no light; neglect no truth. — RICH. BAXTER

[JOHN ROBINSON] charged us, before God and his blessed angels, to follow him no further than he followed Christ; and, if God should reveal any thing to us by any other instrument of his, to be as ready to receive it as ever we were to receive any truth by his ministry; for he was very confident the Lord had more truth and light yet to break forth out of his holy word. He took occasion also miserably to bewail the state and condition of the reformed churches, who were come to a period in religion, and would go no further than the instruments of their Reformation. As, for example, the Lutherans: they could not be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; for whatever part of God's will he had further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And so also, saith he, you see the Calvinists: they stick where he left them, — a misery much to be lamented; for though they were precious shining lights in their times, yet God had not revealed his whole will to them; and were they now living, saith he, they would be as ready and willing to embrace further light as that they had received. Here also he put us in mind of our church covenant, at least that part of it whereby we promise and covenant with God, and one with another, to receive whatsoever light or truth shall be made known to us from his written word; but withal exhorted us to take heed what we received for truth, and well to examine and compare it and weigh it with other Scriptures of truth before we received it. For, saith he, it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick antichristian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once. — EDWARD WINSLOW: *Brief Narration*, Lond. 1646; *in Young's Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers*, pp. 396–7.

These noble sentiments are taken from a report of the farewell address made by JOHN ROBINSON, in the year 1620, to those members of his church who were about to depart from Holland for the purpose of seeking a home in the wildernesses of the New World, where they might enjoy the privileges of religious freedom. The narrator, Governor Winslow, was present at the delivery of the discourse.

Let no man, upon a weak conceit of sobriety, or an ill-applied moderation, think or maintain, that a man can search too far, or be too well studied in the book of God's word or in the book of God's works, — divinity or philosophy; but rather let men endeavor an endless progress or proficience in both. Only let men beware, that they apply both to charity, and not to swelling; to use, and not to ostentation; and, again, that they do not unwisely mingle or confound these learnings together. — LORD BACON: *Advancement of Learning*, book i.; *in Works*, vol. i. p. 164.

The old sceptics that never would profess that they had found a truth, yet showed the best way to search for any, when they doubted as well of what those of the dogmatical sects too credulously received for infallible principles, as they did of the newest conclusions. They were indeed, questionless, too nice, and deceived themselves with the nimbleness of their own sophisms, that permitted no kind of established truth. But, plainly, he that avoids their disputing levity, yet, being able, takes to himself their liberty of inquiry, is in the only way that in all kinds of studies leads and lies open even to the sanctuary of truth; while others, that are servile to common opinion and vulgar suppositions, can rarely hope to be admitted nearer than into the base court of her temple, which too speciously often counterfeits her inmost sanctuary. — JOHN SELDEN: *History of Tithes.*

If you must never change your first opinions or apprehensions, how will you grow in understanding? Will you be no wiser at age than you were at childhood, and after long study and experience than you were before? Nature and grace do tend to increase. Indeed, if you should be never so peremptory in your opinions, you cannot resolve to hold them to the end; for light is powerful, and may change you, whether you will or no: you cannot tell what that light will do, which you never saw. But prejudice will make you resist the light, and make it harder for you to understand. I speak this upon much experience and observation. Our first, unripe apprehensions of things will certainly be greatly changed, if we are studious, and of improved understandings. . . . For my own part, my judgment is altered from many of my youthful, confident apprehensions; and, where it holdeth the same conclusion, it rejecteth abundance of the arguments, as vain, which once it rested in. And where I keep to the same conclusions and arguments, my apprehension of them is not the same, but I see more satisfying light in many things which I took but upon trust before. And if I had resolved to hold to all my

first opinions, I must have forborne most of my studies, and lost much truth, which I have discovered, and not made that my own which I did hold; and I must have resolved to live and die a child. . . . . Ignorance, and ungrounded or ill-grounded persuasions in matters of religion, are the cause that abundance of people delude themselves with the empty name and dead profession of a faith and religion which they were never indeed possessed of. I know there are low degrees of knowledge, comparatively, in many that are true believers; and that there may be much love and holiness where knowledge is very small or narrow as to the objective extent of it; and that there is a knowledge that puffeth up, while charity edifieth; and that, in many that have the narrower knowledge, there may be the fastest faith and adherence to the truth, which will conquer in the time of trial. But yet I must tell you, that the religion which you profess is not indeed your own religion, if you know not what it is, and know not in some measure the true grounds and reasons why you should be of that religion. If you have only learned to say your creed, or repeat the words of Christian doctrine, while you do not truly understand the sense; or if you have no better reasons why you profess the Christian faith than the custom of the country, or the command of princes or governors, or the opinion of your teachers, or the example of your parents, friends, or neighbors, — you are not Christians indeed. You have a human belief or opinion, which objectively is true; but, subjectively in yourselves, you have no true, divine belief. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Christian Directory; in Practical Works*, vol. ii. pp. 129, 170.

Freedom of inquiry is equally open to you and to myself: it is equally laudable in us, when conducted with impartiality and decorum; and it must equally tend to the enlargement of knowledge and the improvement of virtue, while our sincerity does not betray us into precipitation, and while our zeal does not stifle within us the amiable and salutary sentiments of mutual forbearance. Upon the points in which we dissent from each other, arguments will always secure the attention of the wise and good; whereas invective must disgrace the cause which we may respectively wish to support. . . . . Freedom of inquiry in private persons, when far extended, and quite unshackled by artificial restraints, is favorable to the discovery of truth, and, through the progressive influence of truth upon practice, is eventually conducive to the best interests of society. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Works*, vol. iii. pp. 301-2; and vol. iv. pp. 541-2.

The only means by which religious knowledge can be advanced is freedom of inquiry. An opinion is not therefore false because it contradicts received notions; but, whether true or false, let it be submitted to a fair examination. Truth must, in the end, be a gainer by it, and appear with the greater evidence. — BISHOP LOWTH: *Visitation Ser.*

When the right of unlimited inquiry is exerted, the human faculties will be upon the advance: where it is relinquished, they will be of necessity at a stand, and will probably decline. — ROBERT HALL: *Apology for the Freedom of the Press; in Works*, vol. ii. p. 52.

Truth is every man's concernment, every man's right, and every man's most necessary possession. . . . If every man be obliged, as he will answer it to God, to possess himself of truth, he must be free; — free not only to think, but to speak; free to move; free to go in quest of truth; free to bring it home; free to confer with his fellows concerning it; and free to impart what he has acquired. — ISAAC TAYLOR: *Lectures on Spiritual Christianity*, pp. 57–8.

It is surely the birthright of every human being to think for himself. He is amenable alone to conscience and to God for his religious sentiments; and whoever attempts to legislate for the free-born soul, and coerce the faith of another, is perpetrating one of the most detestable of crimes, robbing man of his liberty, and God of his authority. In such a case, submission to man is treason against Heaven. — DR. F. A. COX: *Life of Melancthon*, p. 280.

Reason and Scripture concur in teaching, that it is at once the privilege and the duty of every man to investigate the truth for himself; to employ on religion, as on other subjects, the mental faculties which his Maker has bestowed on him, and the bestowal of which is a sufficient indication that they were intended to be exercised. . . . How monstrous, then, and intolerable the tyranny of those who demand a dominion disclaimed by apostles! Any scheme, indeed, which interferes with the prerogative of every individual to judge for himself in matters of religion, is at once irrational and impious; — irrational, as prohibiting the employment of reason on the most momentous of all subjects, and turning man into a brute; and impious, as destructive of the very nature of religion, as rendering it not "a reasonable service," a mental employment, a homage rendered with "the understanding and the spirit," and suited to the nature of the Being to whom it is rendered, and of the being who renders it, but a mere bodily service, a mechanical exercise. — DR. ROBERT BALMER: *The Scripture Principles of Unity; in Essays on Christian Union*, p. 32.

We are to seek and search, not with our eyes half closed, as though we were fearful lest we should see too much of truth, — lest we should look beyond God, into a region where God is not. In this respect also, seeing that we have such a High Priest, who himself is passed into the heavens, we may approach boldly to the temple of wisdom; for he who has delivered our hearts and souls has also delivered our minds from the bondage of earth. Therefore let no man say to the waves of thought, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further." — JULIUS CHARLES HARE: *The Victory of Faith*, pp. 59, 60.

We may learn from our Lord's appeal to miraculous proofs, as the foundation of his claim to authority, how great is the mistake of those who imagine that Christian faith consists in an uninquiring acquiescence, without any reason for it; or that at least there is the more virtue in a man's faith, the less it is founded on evidence. . . . The faith which Jesus and the apostles commended in their hearers consisted in a readiness to listen fairly to what was said, in an ingenuous openness to conviction, and in an humble acquiescence in what they had good ground for believing to have come from God, however adverse to their prejudices and wishes, and habits of thought; in a firm trust in what they were rationally convinced God had promised, however strange, and foreign from their expectations and conjectures. And yet there have been persons in various ages of the church — and the present is not without them — who represent Christian faith as a thing not merely different from this, but even opposite to it. A man's determination to adhere to the religion of his fathers, merely on the ground that it was theirs, and that it has long existed, and that he has been assured by persons superior to him in rank, and in presumed learning, that the authority of the Bible, and the meaning of it, are such as they tell him, — this has been represented as the most perfect Christian faith! Such grounds for adhering to a religion have been described as not merely sufficient for the most unlearned classes, not merely as the utmost these are capable of attaining, but as absolutely the best; as better than the most rational conviction of a cultivated understanding, that has long been sedulously occupied in "proving all things, and holding fast that which is right." Now, this kind of (falsely called) faith, whose usurped title serves to deceive the unthinking, is precisely what is characterized in Scripture as *want* of faith. For I need hardly remind the reader, that the unbelieving Jews and Pagans of old were those who rejected the "many infallible proofs" which God set before them, because they had resolved to adhere, at all hazards, to the creed

of their fathers, and to take the word of their chief priests or civil magistrates as decisive, and to stop their ears against all evidence, and drown reason by clamor. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Essays on Dangers to Christian Faith*, pp. 125–9.

There is a wide difference in the practical activity of a truth passively acquiesced in, and one attained by a process of inquiry and reflection. The hold of the former upon the understanding and the heart is feeble and fitful, compared with the tenure of that which is valued as the result of toil, the achievement of the understanding, the happy settlement of vexed questions whose agitation has roused every faculty of the mind, and stirred every feeling of the heart. The great multitude, who assent to the authority of Scripture because they know no reason to the contrary, remain, as we see every day, to a most lamentable extent uninfluenced by its teachings, utterly heedless of its solemn declarations. But when did a man become a Christian from investigation of the claims of Christianity, without bowing his mind and soul to its authority? — DR. T. E. BOND, jun., *in Methodist Quarterly Review for April*, 1853; fourth series, vol. v. p. 259.

Why has he [our Master] given us the principle of intellectual curiosity? Most certainly that he might stimulate us in the path of intellectual and religious knowledge. If we stifle this curiosity, if we bury it up, if we have not an enthusiasm even, in the occupying of all the talents with which God has endued us, then we are not consecrating ourselves to him. We do not give him our best offerings. We withhold the freshest fruits. — B. B. EDWARDS: *Writings*, vol. ii. p. 477.

God has written upon our minds the ineffaceable law that they search after the truth, whatever, wherever it be, however arduous the toil for it, whithersoever it may lead. Let it come. Even if it should promise nothing to the utilitarian, there are yet within us the *mirabiles amores* to find it out. A sound heart is alive with this curiosity, and will not retain its health while its aspirations are rebuffed. It gives no unbroken peace to the man who thwarts his reasoning instincts; for, amid all its conflicting demands, it is at times importunate for a reasonable belief. When it is famished by an idle intellect, it loses its tone, becomes bigoted rather than inquisitive, and takes up with theological fancies which reduce it still lower. When it is fed by an inquiring mind, it is enlivened, and reaches out for an expanded faith. — EDWARDS A. PARK: *Theology of the Intellect and of the Feelings; in Bibliotheca Sacra for July*, 1850; vol. vii. p. 543.

Christ came to put an end to hereditary faith, — to make each man's belief original and independent with himself, directly drawn from the only source of Christian doctrine and practice. Nothing is more certain than that religion is a subject upon which all persons are under obligations the most solemn to deliberate, choose, and act for themselves. Freedom of inquiry is a high privilege, as safe for the masses as for individuals; and this boon Christ procured for all our race. He never designed that a few should lead, and that the multitude should be compelled to follow in their steps. But what are the spirit and language of many professed teachers of Christianity? "Out of my creed there is no orthodoxy: out of my church there is no salvation." But, fortunately, the days of such priestly arrogance are numbered. . . . . It is the divine prerogative of truth to restore the original sovereignty of the best powers, and the symmetrical development of all. In this matter, there is no question of more or less; freedom exists, or it does not; and it is obvious that the liberty of a rational being consists precisely in the free use of the faculties inherent in his nature, and of all his faculties or powers, without exception or extravagance. . . . Mental freedom is the only true freedom, the foundation of all other liberty, without which an immortal creature is a degraded slave, and not the less a vassal because his chains may chance to be made of gold.

"For what is freedom but the unfettered use
Of all the powers which God for use hath given?"

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. . . The intellectual power of man proves that there must be an object suitable for its exercise, and demanding its study. This object is truth, the knowledge of something real, and consists in the exact understanding of the highest realities that exist. This is the grand boon proffered to us here and in a more exalted life. — E. L. MAGOON: *Republican Christianity*, pp. 244, 355–6.

In this and the other sections of the present chapter, we should have been glad to make a few extracts from "Essays on the Formation and Publication of Opinions, and on the Pursuit of Truth, by SAMUEL BAILEY;" but, uncertain as to the theological standing of the author, we can only recommend to the attentive perusal of the reader the most beautiful and interesting productions that have perhaps ever been written on these subjects. They are discussed from a philosophical point of view; but the sentiments maintained seem to harmonize with the most enlarged views of the gospel, and are admirably calculated to produce feelings of amity between all the professing disciples of Jesus Christ.

SECT. III. — DISPOSITIONS AND MEANS REQUISITE IN THE SEARCH AFTER TRUTH.

> Imagination's airy wing repress;
> Lock up thy senses; let no passion stir;
> Wake all to reason; let her reign alone;
> Then, in thy soul's deep silence, and the depth
> Of nature's silence, midnight, thus inquire.
>
> EDWARD YOUNG.

Diligence and care in obtaining the best guides and the most convenient assistances, prayer, and modesty of spirit, simplicity of purposes and intentions, humility and aptness to learn, and a peaceable disposition, are necessary to finding out truths, because they are parts of good life, without which our truths will do us little advantage, and our errors have no excuse. But with these dispositions, as he is sure to find out all that is necessary, so what truth he inculpably misses of he is sure is therefore not necessary, because he could not find it when he did his best and his most innocent endeavors. — JEREMY TAYLOR: *Liberty of Prophesying*, sect. xii. 6; *in Works*, vol. vii. p. 116.

1. [In prosecuting your inquiries] Begin at the greatest, most evident, certain and necessary truths, and so proceed orderly to the knowledge of the less by the help of these. If you begin at those truths which spring out of greater common truths, and know not the premises while you plead for the conclusion, you abuse your reason, and lose the truth and your labor both. — 2. The two first things which you are to learn are what man is and what God is. — 3. Having soundly understood the principles of religion, try all the subsequent truths thereby, and receive nothing as truth that is certainly inconsistent with any of these principles. — 4. Believe nothing which certainly contradicteth the end of all religion. If it be a natural or necessary tendency to ungodliness, against the love of God, or against a holy and heavenly mind and conversation, it cannot be truth, whatever it pretend. — 5. Be sure to distinguish well betwixt revealed and unrevealed things. — 6. Be a careful and accurate, though not a vain, distinguisher; and suffer not ambiguity and confusion to deceive you. It is not only in many words, but in one word or syllable, that so much ambiguity and confusion may be contained as may make a long dispute to be but a vain and ridiculous wrangling. — 7. Therefore be specially suspicious of metaphors, as being all but ambiguities till an explication hath fixed

or determined the sense. — 13. Plead not uncertainties against certainties, but make certain points the measure to try the uncertain by. — 14. Plead not the darker texts of Scripture against those that are more plain and clear, nor a few texts against many that are as plain; for that which is interpreted against the most plain and frequent expressions of the same Scripture is certainly misinterpreted. — 21. In controversies which depend most upon skill in the languages, philosophy, or other parts of common learning, prefer the judgment of a few that are the most learned in those matters, before the judgment of the most ancient, or the most godly, or of the greatest numbers, even whole churches, that are unlearned. Every man is most to be regarded in the matters which he is best acquainted with. — 22. In controversies of great difficulty where divines themselves are disagreed, and a clear and piercing wit is necessary, regard more the judgment of a few acute, judicious, well-studied divines that are well versed in those controversies, than of a multitude of dull and common wits that think to carry it by the reputation of their number. — 23. In all contentions, hold close to that which all sides are agreed on. — 24. Take nothing as necessary to salvation in point of faith, which the universal church in every age since Christ did not receive. — 25. Be not borne down by the censoriousness of any to overrun your own understanding and the truth, and to comply with them in their errors and extremes. — 26. Doubt not of well-proved truths, for every difficulty that appeareth against them. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Christian Directory; in Practical Works*, vol. v. pp. 139–50.

These directions from BAXTER have been epitomized; and others, less appropriate, entirely omitted. But it would scarcely be doing justice to the piety of this great man to withhold an excellent passage which occurs in vol. viii. pp. 29, 30: "Come to the word [the Scripture] in meekness and humility, with a teachable frame of spirit, and a willingness to know the truth, and a resolution to stand to it, and yield to what shall be revealed to you; and beg of God to show you his will, and lead you into the truth; and you will find that he will be found of them that ask him."

He that will advance any thing in the finding out of truth must bring to it that traveller's indifference which the heathen so long since recommended to the world. He must not desire it should lie on the one side rather than the other, lest his desire that it should, prompt him, without just reason, to believe that it does. And so in religion too: he that will make a right judgment, what to believe or what to practise, must first throw off all prejudice in favor of his own opinion,

or against any others; and resolve never to be so tied up to any point or party as not to be at all times ready impartially to examine whatsoever can reasonably be objected against either. — ARCHBISHOP WAKE: *Sermons and Discourses*, pp. 17, 18.

Whatever warmth or heat any may show, it will still remain an eternal truth, that a calm temper of mind, and a meek and charitable disposition of soul, are qualifications absolutely necessary either to discover truth ourselves, or to judge right of the sentiments and opinions of others. That blind and furious transport of mind which we commonly term zeal is of no manner of use, either for the one or the other of these purposes, but, on the contrary, very prejudicial in all serious inquiries, especially those of religious controversies. — Abridged from LE CLERC: *Abstract of Dr. Clarke's Polemical Writings*, p. 113; Lond. 1713.

Let us divest ourselves of a party spirit. Let us never determine an opinion by its agreement or disagreement with what our masters, our parents, or our teachers have inculcated, but by its conformity or contrariety to the doctrine of Jesus Christ and his apostles. Let us never receive or reject a maxim because it favors or opposes our passions, but as it agrees with or opposes the laws of that tribunal, the bases of which are justice and truth. Let us be fully convinced that our chief study should be to know what God determines, and to make his commands the only rules of our knowledge and practice. . . . . Truth requires that we should sacrifice precipitancy of judgment. Few people are capable of this sacrifice: indeed, there are but few who do not consider suspension of judgment as a weakness, although it is one of the noblest efforts of genius and capacity. In regard to religion, people usually make a scruple of conscience of suspending their judgments; yet, in our opinion, a Christian is so much the more obliged to do this, by how much more the truths of the gospel surpass in sublimity and importance all the objects of human science. I forgive this folly in a man educated in superstition, who is threatened with eternal damnation, if he reverence certain doctrines, which not only he has not examined, but which he is forbidden to examine under the same penalty. But that men of learning and piety should imagine they have obtained a signal victory over infidelity, and have accredited religion, when, by the help of some terrific declamations, they have extorted a catechumen's consent, — this is what we could have scarcely believed, had we not seen numberless examples of it. A truth received without proof is, in regard to us, a kind of falsehood

Yea, a truth received without evidence is a never-failing source of many errors, because a truth received without evidence is founded, in regard to us, only on false principles. We must, then, suspend our judgments, whatever inclination we may naturally have to determine at once, in order to save the attention and labor which a more ample discussion of truth would require. — Abridged from JAMES SAURIN: *Sermons*, vol. i. pp. 44–5, 136.

The Scriptures direct us to inquire into the foundation of the doctrines proposed to our acceptance; and indeed, without the exercise of our reason, I know not how we could understand or adopt the plainest doctrines of Christianity. But it is of much importance to have right dispositions of mind at the time of our inquiry. Such are humility, modesty, docility, and a sincere desire to improve. — VICESIMUS KNOX: *Sermons; in Works*, vol. vi. p. 120.

We ought to have an honest desire after light; and, if we have the desire, it will not remain unproductive. . . . We ought to have a habit of prayer conjoined with a habit of inquiry; and to this more will be given. . . . It is through the avenues of a desirous heart and of an exercised understanding, and of sustained attention, and of faculties in quest of truth, and laboring after the possession of it, that God sends into the mind his promised manifestations. . . . He who without prayer looks confidently forward to success as the fruit of his own investigations is not walking humbly with God. — DR. THOMAS CHALMERS. *Sermons on the Depravity of Human Nature; in Select Works*, vol. iv. pp. 27–8.

The Scriptures themselves will serve to explain their own meaning in the most essential points, if studied, under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, with an humble, patient, diligent, and candid mind. And such a mind, even without extensive learning or great ability, will be more enlightened by them than the most learned or the most ingenious, if led away by conceited and presumptuous fancies, and given up to indolent prejudice, or blinded by spiritual pride, or the spirit of party. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Sermons on Various Subjects*, pp. 50–1.

Inquiry in theology, as in every thing else, to be fruitful and instructive, must be undogmatic, — must strive, apart from hypothesis and all later superpositions, to ascend to the truth, as it appears in its original sources, or in its successive forms throughout the history of the church. To have recourse either to the Bible itself, or the writings of the Fathers, in a different spirit, and to seek in them, not

simply for the truth in its corresponding and appropriate expression, but in some favorite dogmatic form of a subsequent age, is clearly at once an historical and unphilosophical process, in which much ingenuity may be displayed, but by which truth can never be elicited and advanced. It is tainted with the worst vice of the old method of physical inquiry, from which Bacon initiated our deliverance; making, as it does, the limited ideas and idol formulas of some one age the measure of that objective truth which transcends them all. — *North British Review for May*, 1853; Amer. edit. vol. xiv. p. 49.

In the formation of your own opinions, . . . be independent; use your own reason, your own senses, your own Bible. Be untrammeled; throw off the chains and fetters which compel so many minds to believe only what they are told to believe, and to walk intellectually and morally in paths marked out for them by human teachers. . . . Be modest. It is the characteristic of a weak mind to be dogmatical and positive. Such a mind makes up in dogged determination to believe what it wants in evidence. Come to your conclusions cautiously, and take care that your belief covers no more ground than your proofs. Do not dispute about what you do not understand, nor push your investigations beyond the boundaries of human knowledge. Men are often sadly perplexed with difficulties which arise from the simple fact that they have got beyond their depth. — JACOB ABBOTT: *The Corner-stone*, pp. 357–8.

The principles which have been recommended in this and the two preceding sections are ostensibly held by all Protestants, whether Trinitarian or Unitarian. But they are contravened by parents, teachers, and divines, when they would quench the love of truth and of investigation, natural to honest and noble minds, by grounding belief on the authority of parentage, of the church, or of celebrated men; by misrepresenting the sentiments and motives of those who differ from them in opinion; by instilling the notion, that no genuine faith, no sincere piety, no well-grounded hope of heaven, can be found beyond the pale of their own narrow creed; in fine, by virtually declaring, "Inquire, — but never doubt; search the Scriptures — to find our views; read with the understanding — that we are right; reason with the conviction — that all else are wrong. Your interests in this world, and your salvation in the next, depend on the unconditional surrender of your understandings to the faith *we* prescribe, — on the unhesitating rejection of all contrary opinions."

These and other impediments to free inquiry, and to the reception of views of truth founded on individual conviction, will be treated of in the following section.

SECT. IV. — HINDRANCES TO FREE INQUIRY, AND TO THE RECEPTION AND SPREAD OF TRUTH.

We pray,
Above all things, Lord, that all men be free
From bondage, ...
The bondage of religious bigotry
And bald antiquity, servility
Of thought or speech.

P. J. BAILEY.

§ 1. EARLY PREJUDICES.

Another great cause of pretended false knowledge and confidence is the unhappy prejudices which our minds contract even in our childhood, before we have time and wit and conscience to try things by true deliberation. Children and youth must receive much upon trust, or else they can learn nothing; but then they have not wit to proportion their apprehensions to the evidence, whether of credibility or certainty; and so fame and tradition and education, and the country's vote, do become the ordinary parents of many lies; and folly maketh us to fasten so fearlessly in our first apprehensions, that they keep open the door to abundance [of] more falsehoods; and it must be clear teachers, or great, impartial studies, of a self-denying mind, with a great blessing of God, that must deliver us from prejudice, and undeceive us. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Knowledge and Love Compared; in Practical Works*, vol. xv. pp. 156–7.

It is no small work to examine the truth, when we arrive at an age capable of discussion. The fundamental points of religion, I grant, lie in the Scriptures clear and perspicuous, and within the comprehension of all who choose to attend to them; but when we pass from infancy to manhood, and arrive at an age in which reason seems mature, we find ourselves covered with a veil, which either hides objects from us, or disfigures them. The public discourses we have heard in favor of the sect in which we were educated, the inveterate hatred we have for all others who hold principles opposite to ours, the frightful portraits that are drawn before our eyes of the perils we must encounter if we depart from the way we have been brought up in, the impressions made upon us by the examples and decisions of our parents and masters and teachers, the bad taste of those who had the care of our education, and who prevented our acquiring that most noble disposition, without

which it is impossible ever to be a true philosopher or a real Christian, — I mean that of suspending our judgment on subjects not sufficiently proved, — from all this arise clouds that render the truth inaccessible, and which the world cannot dissipate. We do not say that natural talents or supernatural assistance are wanting: we are fully convinced that God will never give up to final error any man who does all in his power to understand the truth. But the world are incapable of this work. Why? Because all the world, except a few, hate labor and meditation in regard to the subjects which respect another life; because all the world would choose rather to attach themselves to what regards their temporal interests than to the great interest of eternal happiness; because all the world like better to suppose the principles imbibed in their childhood true, than to impose on themselves the task of weighing them anew in the balance of a sound and severe reason; because all the world have an invincible aversion to suppose, that, when they are arrived at manhood, they have almost lost their time in some respects, and that, when they leave school, they begin to be capable of instruction. — JAMES SAURIN: *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 29.

Many persons, not generally uninquiring or uncandid, or incompetent to reason accurately, have yet been so early accustomed to take for granted, and assent to on authority, certain particular points, that they afterwards adhere to the belief so formed, rather from association than on evidence. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Essays on Difficulties in Paul's Writings*, p. 219.

One great source of erroneous impressions on all subjects is the power of influences exerted in early life, and which are sometimes so strong as utterly to bid defiance to all argument. . . . This influence of early associations has more power than all other causes put together, in the formation of religious opinions. The children of Mahometans become Mahometans themselves, without arguments in favor of the Prophet; and, in the Christian world, religious opinions are hereditary, and pass down, with exceptions comparatively few and rare, from father to son; so that Popery and Protestantism, Episcopacy and Dissent, and Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist opinions, occupy, in the main, the same ground, from generation to generation. . . . Every intelligent observer of the human mind, and especially of the habits and susceptibilities of childhood, will at once admit, that other influences than those of argument are the efficient ones in the production of these almost universal effects. — JACOB ABBOTT: *The Corner-stone*, pp. 290–2.

§ 2. PROSTRATION OF THE JUDGMENT TO AUTHORITY.

Is it not blameworthy in us, and a proof of carnality, . . . to give up our judgment to be wholly guided by the writings of Luther or Calvin, or of any other mortal man whatsoever? Worthy instruments they were, both of them, of God's glory, and such as did excellent service to the church in their times, whereof we yet find the benefit; and we are unthankful if we do not bless God for it: and therefore it is an unsavory thing for any man to gird at their names, whose memories ought to be precious. But yet were they not men? Had they received the Spirit in the fulness of it, and not by measure? Knew they otherwise than in part, or prophesied otherwise than in part? Might they not in many things, and they not in some things, mistake and err? Howsoever, the apostle's interrogatories are unanswerable. What saith he? "Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" Even so, was either Luther or Calvin crucified for you? Or were ye baptized into the name of Luther or Calvin, or any other man, that any one of you should say, I am of Luther; or any other, I am of Calvin; and I of him, and I of him? What is Calvin or Luther . . . but "ministers by whom ye believed;" that is to say, instruments, but not lords, of your belief? — BISHOP SANDERSON: *Thirty-five Sermons*, p. 295; Lond. 1681, seventh edit.

There are many among us so strangely engaged by false principles to an ill cause, that it is in vain to offer them the clearest arguments to convince them. If you bring them Scripture, it is true that must be heard; but then, be it never so plain, they are not competent judges of the meaning of it; and they durst not trust their own interpretation to tell them that Abraham begat Isaac, if the church should think fit to expound it otherwise. . . . If you offer them reason as clear as the plainest demonstration, why, that were well; but still private reason may err, and the church cannot. . . . Sense, reason, Scripture, all are of no force against this one prejudice of their church's authority. — ARCHBISHOP WAKE: *Sermons and Discourses*, pp. 18, 19.

Implicit faith has been sometimes ludicrously styled *fides carbonaria*, from the noted story of one who, on examining an ignorant collier on his religious principles, asked him what it was that he believed. He answered, "I believe what the church believes." The other rejoined, "What, then, does the church believe?" He replied readily, "The church believes what I believe." The other, desirous if possible to bring him to particulars, once more resumes his inquiry: "Tell me,

then, I pray you, what it is which you and the church both believe." The only answer the collier could give was, "Why truly, sir, the church and I both — believe the same thing." This is implicit faith in perfection, and, in the estimation of some celebrated doctors, the sum of necessary and saving knowledge in a Christian. — DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL: *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, Lect. 23.

Deference to great names is a sentiment which it would be base to attempt to eradicate, and impossible were it attempted. But, like other offsprings of the mind, it is at first rude and ill-shapen. It makes no selection, no discrimination; it retains the impress of its original entire, just as it was made; it is a vague, undistinguishing admiration, which consecrates in a mass all the errors and deformities, along with the real excellences, of its object. Time only, the justest of all critics, gives it correctness and proportion, and converts what is at first merely the action of a great upon an inferior mind into an enlightened and impartial estimate of distinguished worth. — ROBERT HALL: *Reply to the Rev. Joseph Kinghorn; in Works*, vol. i. p. 502.

Think you, my brethren, that there is no Popery among you? Is there no taking of your religion upon trust from another, when you should draw it fresh and unsullied from the fountain-head of inspiration? Do you ever dare to bring your favorite minister to the tribunal of the word? or would you tremble at the presumption of such an attempt; so that the hearing of the word carries a greater authority over your mind than the reading of the word? Now, this want of daring, this trembling at the very idea of a dissent from your minister, this indolent acquiescence in his doctrine, is just calling another man master; it is putting the authority of man over the authority of God; it is throwing yourself into a prostrate attitude at the footstool of human infallibility. It is not just kissing the toe of reverence; but it is the profounder degradation of the mind, and of all its faculties. It is said that Papists worship saints; but have we no consecrated names in the annals of Reformation, — no worthies who hold too commanding a place in the remembrance and affection of Protestants? Are there no departed theologians, whose works hold too domineering an ascendency over the faith and practice of Christians? Do we not bend the understanding before the volumes of favorite authors, and do a homage to those representations of the minds of the men of other days which should be exclusively given to the representation of the mind of the Spirit, as put down in the book of the Spirit's revelation? It is right that each of us should give the contri-

bution of his own talents and his own learning to this most interesting cause; but let the great drift of our argument be to prop the authority of the Bible, and to turn the eye of earnestness upon its pages. — Abridged from DR. THOMAS CHALMERS: *Select Works*, vol. iv. pp. 244–5.

Since men really cannot believe or disbelieve without something before the mind which it takes for evidence, the first dictate of a sound conscience would be to examine that evidence carefully, lest we should be deceived; so that following conscience, in this sense, would come to the same thing as following reason. But what these men mean by conscience is certain "feelings of awe and reverence and admiration," and blind submission to authority, which they are pleased to call by that name; and the course they mean to recommend is taking for evidence of the *truth* of a religious system its apparent fitness for gratifying such feelings. The difference, then, between them and us is just this: *we* demand in religious matters the same sort of evidence as the known laws of reason and the common experience of mankind require as the only adequate proof in other matters. *They* substitute for such proof a sort of evidence in which impartial reason can discover no cogency, and upon which they would themselves refuse to act in the ordinary affairs of life. For though they will tell you that natural piety requires a man to abide by the creed of an ignorant or doting parent or pastor, yet you will rarely find them ready to purchase a blind horse, or sell out stock at a disadvantage, or exchange a good farm for a bad one, in deference to the same venerable authority. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Cautions for the Times*, p. 333–4.

The founders of almost every denomination have something of attraction about them. Generally they have been men of worth and of public notoriety. They were raised up, it might be, in a dark and declining age, and had both a great work to do, and grace given them to do it. While they were men of signal excellence, yet still they were men; and every one of them had failings, and peculiarities of manners and habits, which made them singular. They have left their name upon their sect; and they have stamped it, to a certain extent, with their own features. . . . . What renders the *worship* — for I can call it by no other name — of the early Reformers, and of the heads of any religious party, now peculiarly unreasonable, is the fact, that, while they were excellent men, they were very lately come out of the bosom of the church of Rome, and had their lot cast in a somewhat dark and intolerant age. To set them up as the paragons of

excellence as to every point of church order is to suppose, that the religious world, amid the light and civilization of modern times, has been standing still; and that the dust of ages has not been wiped off, in the course of centuries, from the church of Christ. As time rolls on, and society improves, the church is maturing in experience, and has higher advantages for studying the mind of Christ, and perceiving that the excellent ones of the earth are not confined to any one denomination. — DR. GAVIN STRUTHERS: *Party Spirit; in Essays on Christian Union*, pp. 432–5.

Even whilst not thus erring as to ourselves, we may err, in the like spirit of self-exaltation, as to our spiritual leaders, our religious parties and partisans, and our chosen models of Christian perfection, and our human standards of Christian truth. The second and declining stage in the history of every great religious reformation has been thus marked. In the first and purer age, the true-hearted leaders forget self, and think of the truth only, and of the Master, and of the due vindication and honor of these. But, in the next generation, the leaders of the generation past have become demigods, and must have their funeral monuments erected as having become morally, to their disciples, the new Pillars of Hercules, beyond which Truth may not travel, nor Research dare to pass with her adventurous foot. . . . We, of this land where New England has borne so large and glorious a share in leavening the national character, are probably in some danger of idolatrous homage to the names of the Puritan Fathers. It is so easy and so common an infirmity to let the priest glide from the altar, where he only serves, into the very shrine, where he may fill the throne; to make the spiritual guide virtually the spiritual god, and to treat those by whom we have believed in Christ as if they were those *in whom* we have believed; and we thus extol and guard and hallow their names instead of God's. — WM. R. WILLIAMS: *Lectures on the Lord's Prayer*, pp. 42–3.

§ 3. BLIND ATTACHMENT TO RECEIVED OPINIONS.

Another error . . . is a conceit, that, of former opinions or sects, after variety and examination, the best hath still prevailed, and suppressed the rest; so as, if a man should begin the labor of a new search, he were like to light upon somewhat formerly rejected, and by rejection brought into oblivion: as if the multitude, or the wisest, for the multitude's sake, were not ready to give passage rather to that

which is popular and superficial than to that which is substantial and profound. For the truth is, that time seemeth to be of the nature of a river or stream, which carrieth down to us that which is light and blown up, and sinketh and drowneth that which is weighty and solid. — LORD BACON: *Advancement of Learning*, book i.; *in Works*, vol. i. p. 173; Phil. edit. 1852.

The multitude is a bad guide to direct our faith. We will not introduce here the famous controversy on this question, whether a great number form a presumption in favor of any religion, or whether universality be a certain evidence of the true Christian church. How often has this question been debated and determined! How often have we proved against one community, which displays the number of its professors with so much parade, that, if the pretence were well founded, it would operate in favor of Paganism! for Pagans were always more numerous than Christians. How often have we told them, that, in divers periods of the ancient church, idolatry and idolaters have been enthroned in both the kingdoms of Judah and Israel! How often have we alleged, that, in the time of Jesus Christ, the church was described as a "little flock," Luke xii. 32; that Heathens and Jews were all in league against Christianity at first, and that the gospel had only a small number of disciples! ... When I say the multitude is a bad guide in matters of faith, I mean that the manner in which most men adhere to truth is not by principles which ought to attach them to it, but by a spirit of negligence and prejudice. — JAMES SAURIN: *Sermons*, vol. ii. pp. 28–9.

Though there is doubtless a certain degree of weight in this argument [the argument in favor of the Divinity of Christ founded on his promise that the Spirit of truth should abide for ever with his followers], yet, I think, Robinson rests too much upon it, and repeats it too often; for it is a fact not less certain than melancholy, that an immense majority of Christians (ex. gr. all the Russias, all the Christians of Asia, and of Africa, and of South America, the larger and more populous portions of Poland and of Germany, nine-tenths of France, and all Spain, Portugal, Italy, Sicily, &c. &c.) have been given up to the most despicable and idolatrous superstitions. When Christ comes, shall he find faith on the earth? I say unto you, Nay. — S. T. COLERIDGE: *Literary Remains; in Works*, vol. v. p. 535.

No man doubts that a strictly universal consent would be a very strong argument indeed; but then, by the very fact of its being disputed, it ceases to be universal, and general consent is a very different

thing from universal. It becomes, then, the consent of the majority; and we must examine the nature of the minority, and also the peculiar nature of the opinions or practices agreed in, before we can decide whether general consent be really an argument for or against the truth of an opinion. For it has been said, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you;" and then it would be equally true of such a generation or generations, that it was, "Woe to that opinion in which all men agree." — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Letter* 156; *in Life and Correspondence*, pp. 297–8.

It is only an assumption, that universality and ubiquity are made the tests of religious doctrine. No universality or ubiquity can make that divine which never was such. It is a mere prejudice of veneration for antiquity, and the imposing aspect of an unanimous acquiescence (if unanimous it really be) which makes us regard that as truth which comes so recommended to us. Truth is rather the attribute of the few than of the many. The real church of God may be the small remnant, scarcely visible amidst the mass of surrounding professors. Who, then, shall pronounce any thing to be divine truth, simply because it has the marks of having been generally or universally received among men? — BISHOP HAMPDEN: *Bampton Lectures*, p. 356.

Except the prejudices imbibed in early years, there is perhaps no influence so powerfully affecting the belief of individuals, as that resulting from their intercourse with persons who hold, or who profess to hold, opinions of an unvarying stamp, especially in matters of religion; and who neither by word nor action ever intimate the possibility of their being in the wrong. These individuals may, at one period of their lives, have been led by satisfactory evidence to take views of truth very different, as a whole, from those received by a majority of their fellow-Christians. But unless, by the vigor of their understandings or by a reiterated attention to the grounds of their convictions, they can, when requisite, summon up the reasons for their faith, they will, in all probability, insensibly and gradually yield to the counteracting impressions made by the unhesitating credence and dogmatism of the majority around them. Even the docility of their dispositions, which formed an element in their searchings after truth, may tend to loosen their attachment to opinions coming into collision with the general current. If such be the effect sometimes produced on the minds of those who are not wholly insensible to the demands of a faith based on personal investigation, how potent must be the desire on the part of others, less prone to inquiry, to adopt the opinions of the multitude!

We do not mean to imply, that the voice of the many should be despised, when it is uttered from strong and earnest convictions. It may be the echo of God's voice as expressed in the Scriptures, and in the heart of

our common humanity. There is a presumption in its favor, when it speaks of great and benignant principles underlying all forms of Christian belief and worship; when it is heard alike in the lofty church and the lowly meeting-house; in the meditations of the mystic, and the reasonings of the rationalist; in the prayers of the saint, and the theories of the philosopher; in the converse of the Papist and the Protestant, of the Trinitarian and the Unitarian. There is a presumption in its favor, when it speaks of the absolute sovereignty and universal love of the infinite Father; of the impersonation of divine power, wisdom, and goodness in the mission and character of God's Son; of the responsibleness and immortality of man; of the slavery and debasement of sin, the freedom and blessedness of holiness; of profound gratitude and submission to God, deep reverence and love for Christ, kind words and good offices towards all men. The general acknowledgment of such principles and doctrines, though more or less obscured by inconsistent views and practices, forms a presumption for their essential truth which should not be slighted by the boldest of inquirers. But we need not say, that the opinions which are wafted down from one age to another, — which are strewn over the surface of society and the church, — which play around the human brain, but do not reach the heart; or which, if principles of action, serve only as stimuli for the display of hostile words and fanatic doings, — afford no *primâ-facie* evidence of having truth for the basis on which they rest.

§ 4. Predilections for the Mysterious.

There is, in truth, a vitiated appetite in our nature for mystery and terror. We are disappointed by simplicity; we nauseate that which is common, and despise every thing which we comprehend. The languid mind must gaze at something in the distant ground, half visible, half in shade; an object half pleasing, half terrible; full of promise and full of threat, lovely and hateful, incongruous and impossible. We are so desirous of involving religion in mystery, that we are displeased at finding it so clear in its nature, and so definite in its object; we require a more splendid and magnificent object; we despise the waters of Israel, and pant for Abana and Pharpar, and the mighty rivers of Damascus. — Sydney Smith: *Sermons*, vol. ii. pp. 255–6.

Pressed by the arguments urged against fleshly views of the sacrament, intelligent men, who still cherish such views, have, for the most part, betaken themselves to a place behind the veil of mystery. "The *how* and *why* have nothing to do," they tell us, "with such a sacred and awful mystery. Unbelief in it is profane; calling it in question is presumptuous; doubting, even when urged to do so by reason and our senses, is criminal." This, and the like, has been and is still said,

until the bare repetition of it has almost, of itself, forced it upon the minds of the greater mass of nominal Christians. . . . Such suggestions are the usual and the last refuge of those who feel that they are driven from the field of reasoning and argument. They have this advantage, that they are in their alleged form so indefinite and airy, that you cannot easily find out their true nature, so as to know *where* or *how* you can bring forward what is sensible and palpable in opposition to them. They satisfy mystics better than argument or reason would; because they obviously suit that trait in their character which is the predominating and influential one. Hence the final retreat, the *sanctum sanctorum* of those who have fled from the battle-fields of reason and exegesis and argument, is always found to be in mystery. *Procul, procul, este profani!* Meantime, as a Protestant, I must think that it becomes us, on such a point, to be able to give a reason for the faith that is in us. No outcry of this nature can induce a man of sober judgment to abandon his position. It is the never-failing resort of those who have nothing better to say, to betake themselves to crying out, — "Mystery! awful mystery! It would be profanation to make even an attempt at investigation or explanation." . . . . . Faith — I repeat it, I would God it might sink deep into every Christian heart! — faith is believing what is revealed, not believing what is unrevealed and impossible. There may be — there are — mysteries, many and great, which belong to things and truths connected intimately with the gospel. . . . But no true gospel mystery involves a contradiction or an absurdity. — MOSES STUART, *in Bibliotheca Sacra for May*, 1844; vol. i. pp. 267–8 and 278–9.

Sentiments such as these, though specially opposed to the doctrine of Christ's real bodily presence in the Lord's Supper, are well suited to exhibit the influence, in general, of a love for the mystical or the mysterious in foreclosing the mind against all appeals to reason, and a rational interpretation of Scripture.

I should not deem it necessary to say more, did I not know what is the mournful effect upon the human mind of being trained for ages to disregard the most sacred and fundamental intellectual and moral intuitions, under the plea of faith and mystery. The mind seems to be paralyzed and stunned, as if it had been smitten down by a blow, and cannot again, in that particular, re-act and rally, and recover the use of its powers. Such an effect has been extensively produced on the human mind for ages by this result of the discussion under Augustine; for, when the plea of any great moral or intellectual intuitions has

been once heard, and, after long, earnest, and full debate, rejected, and the course of thought has afterwards rolled on in disregard of them for subsequent centuries under the guidance of ecclesiastical authority, and of the original arguments, in one deep channel, it becomes almost impossible to restore the human mind to the vantage-ground on which it stood when the original conflict began. — DR. EDWARD BEECHER: *Conflict of Ages*, pp. 305–6.

§ 5. IMPATIENCE OF DOUBT, AND AVERSION TO TROUBLE.

Another error is an impatience of doubt, and haste to assertion without due and mature suspension of judgment. For the two ways of contemplation are not unlike the two ways of action commonly spoken of by the ancients: the one plain and smooth in the beginning, and in the end impassable; the other rough and troublesome in the entrance, but after a while fair and even. So it is in contemplation: if a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but, if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties. — LORD BACON: *Advancement of Learning*, book i.; *in Works*, vol. i. p. 173.

Christianity being at this time divided into several sects, whereof some must necessarily be in an error, may we not therefore place in the number of the lazy those persons who, full of all other things but the love of the truth, have never carefully examined which of these sects is most conformable to the sentiments of the apostles? I own that divers other motives might lead them to remain, without knowing why themselves, in that party wherein they happened to be born, and to condemn all others without vouchsafing to examine their tenets; but, if you remark it well, it will appear that one of the principles which occasion this conduct is a certain lazy aversion to the trouble of searching after the truth in matters of this kind. — LE CLERC: *Causes of Incredulity*, pp. 101-2, Lond. 1697.

Any serious employment of the understanding is inconsistent with habitual indolence. Discussion and inquiry are always laborious. Time and patience and pains are necessary to separate truth from falsehood, — to collect and to compose the arguments on each side. Prejudices arising from temper, from education, from interest, and from innumerable other causes, are not easily overcome; and, when a ray of reason breaks through them, resolution is wanted to follow steadily its guidance: and yet without this labor we forfeit all the use and benefit

of our understanding. If we snatch the first appearances, and sit down contented with them, to what purpose is it that we are able to investigate hidden truths? What avails our faculty of judging, if we suffer each thin pretence to conceal them from us? It might be expected, that they who entertain every wandering opinion without examination should dismiss it without regret on the arrival of a new guest. But the fact is otherwise. This kind of levity is attended with obstinacy. The same disposition which leads men into error makes them unwilling to correct it: a state of doubtfulness is a state of uneasiness. The mind, therefore, hastens to the end of its journey; but to trace its steps back again, and examine all the windings by which the truth may have escaped, is to the indolent an intolerable labor. — DR. WILLIAM SAMUEL POWELL: *Discourses*, No. I. pp. 6, 7.

Some people have so strong a propensity to form fixed opinions on every subject to which they turn their thoughts, that their mind will brook no delay. They cannot bear to doubt or hesitate. Suspense in judging is to them more insufferable than the manifest hazard of judging wrong; and therefore, when they have not sufficient evidence, they will form an opinion from what they have, be it ever so little; or even from their own conjectures, without any evidence at all. Now, to believe without proper evidence, and to doubt when we have evidence sufficient, are equally the effects, not of the strength, but of the weakness, of the understanding. — DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL: *The Four Gospels*, Diss. xii. part v. sect. 9.

There is a strong tendency in human nature to save itself from the trouble of inquiry and the uneasiness of doubt. We do not like to be left for a moment in uncertainty or suspense; we are impatient of the labor of examining things for ourselves; we are alarmed at the danger of mistake, and uneasy under the sense of personal responsibility; and so we are disposed beforehand to accept a guide in religion, who shall constantly claim the power of conducting us with unerring skill, and who shall tell us that we have nothing to do but follow him. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Cautions for the Times*, p. 103.

We make sweeping assertions, disposing of whole classes of subjects at a word, or we take a general principle which is perhaps true in the main, and carry it out to extremes, to which it cannot fairly extend. We do this either from the influence of an almost universal tendency of the human mind to love sweeping generalities, or else because it is troublesome to pause and reflect, and ascertain exceptions. In fact, a reflecting man will often detect himself believing a proposition merely

because, when expressed, it sounds antithetic and striking, or because it is comprehensive and distinct, and, right or wrong, presents a convenient solution for whole classes of difficulties. The human mind will, in a word, run into almost any belief, by which it may be saved the labor of patient thought, and at the same time avoid the mortification of acknowledging its ignorance. — JACOB ABBOTT: *The Cornerstone*, p. 302.

§ 6. PARTY SPIRIT AND PERSONAL INTEREST.

Another great cause of confidence in false conceits is the bias of some personal interest prevailing with a corrupted will, and the mixture of sense and passion in the judgment. For as interested men hardly believe what seemeth against them, and easily believe that which they would have to be true; so sense and passion, or affections, usually so bear down reason that they think it their right to possess the throne. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Knowledge and Love Compared; in Practical Works*, vol. xv. pp. 157–8.

Self-conceit . . . promotes indolence and obstinacy. For why should he toil any longer in the mines of knowledge who is already possessed of their most valuable treasures? how can he submit to try his opinions by the judgment of others who is himself the fittest to decide? This temper, when the mind is conversant with points of the highest nature, such as relate to religion and government, will show itself in violent bigotry. What indeed is this, but an obstinate adherence to ill-grounded notions; with a conceit, that we only, and those of our own sect or party, are the favorites of God and the friends of mankind, and that all who differ from us are weak or wicked? Want of industry to examine our own tenets, of candor to listen to those of others, and of modesty in judging of both, lays a sure foundation for this vice; which can never be removed but by another thing equally wanted, an extensive acquaintance with the world. This would certainly convince us, that among persons of every denomination some may be found of excellent understandings and distinguished virtue. — DR. WILLIAM SAMUEL POWELL: *Discourses*, No. I. p. 8.

When a strong prejudice against any description of persons is deeply rooted in the general body of a people, and both their understandings and their feelings are inveterately convinced of its justice, the eradication of it requires length of time: no powers of reason or eloquence can remove it on a sudden, or even without incessant repe-

tition of effort. This is particularly the case in all questions of a complicated nature, upon which the feelings and passions of men have been long and violently agitated, and both religious and political parties have been deeply engaged. — CHARLES BUTLER: *Reminiscences*, page 277.

Truth and error, as they are essentially opposite in their nature, so the causes to which they are indebted for their perpetuity and triumph are not less so. Whatever retards a spirit of inquiry is favorable to error; whatever promotes it, to truth. But nothing, it will be acknowledged, has a greater tendency to obstruct the exercise of free inquiry, than the spirit and feeling of a party. Let a doctrine, however erroneous, become a party distinction, and it is at once intrenched in interests and attachments which make it extremely difficult for the most powerful artillery of reason to dislodge it. It becomes a point of honor in the leaders of such parties, which is from thence communicated to their followers, to defend and support their respective peculiarities to the last; and, as a natural consequence, to shut their ears against all the pleas and remonstrances by which they are assailed. Even the wisest and best of men are seldom aware how much they are susceptible of this sort of influence; and while the offer of a world would be insufficient to engage them to recant a known truth, or to subscribe an acknowledged error, they are often retained in a willing captivity to prejudices and opinions which have no other support, and which, if they could lose sight of party feelings, they would almost instantly abandon. . . . It is this alone which has ensured a sort of immortality to those hideous productions of the human mind, the shapeless abortions of night and darkness, which reason, left to itself, would have crushed in the moment of their birth. — ROBERT HALL: *Terms of Communion; in Works*, vol. i. p. 352.

§ 7. THE SPECULATIONS OF VANITY AND THE LOVE OF SINGULARITY.

Such as reject sentiments generally received, or at least received by a great number of persons, should take care that the love of singularity, rather than a demonstration that others are mistaken, has made them quit the beaten road. It is true, indeed, that the multitude of those who embrace a certain opinion is not a good proof of the truth of it; but, on the other hand, it is no cogent argument that a thing is false because many people believe it. — LE CLERC: *Causes of Incredulity*, p. 30.

Men there are who, in matters of doctrine, suffer themselves to be carried away by every idle blast; who catch at this or that opinion, because it has the gloss of novelty; who are seduced from the sound form of religion by artful or violent fanatics, recommending their own peculiar dogmas upon the ground of superior sanctity in the teacher and the taught; and while from one part of human infirmity, in the precipitation with which such notions have been once embraced, we have another instance of the same infirmity manifested in the pertinacity with which they are retained. These misguided men are watchful indeed against the smallest encroachments of common sense. They stand fast in opposing assumption to argument, and ideal experiences to the general moral sentiments and habits of their fellow-creatures and fellow-Christians. They quit themselves like dogmatists too illuminated to be instructed, and like zealots too impetuous to be restrained. . . . Fondness for novelty engenders at first versatility in belief; that versatility is followed by ambition of singularity; that ambition is increased by sympathy with other men, whom we consider not as rivals, but associates in the common pursuit of spiritual distinction from the bulk of mankind. By the co-operation of these causes, pride and fanaticism gradually gain an entire ascendency over the affections and the judgment, which soon become ductile to them; and by various progressions they ultimately produce an inveterate and invincible rigidity in opinion, a contemptuous aversion to farther inquiry, a restless impatience of dissent however modest, and discussion however sober. Most assuredly such a state of mind has no encouragement from Scripture, where we are directed to prove all things, and cleave to that which after such proof is perceived to be good; to be on the watch against rash and deceitful teachers; to stand fast in the sound form of doctrine once delivered to true believers; to quit ourselves like men who disdain to be the blind followers of blind guides; to be strong in resisting every attempt to seduce us from those simple and sublime truths which are alike approved by reason, and sanctioned by revelation. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Sermon on Resolution; in Works*, vol. vi. pp. 332–4.

Nor is a mind inflated with vanity more disqualified for right action than just speculation, or better disposed to the pursuit of truth than the practice of virtue. To such a mind the simplicity of truth is disgusting. Careless of the improvement of mankind, and intent only upon astonishing with the appearance of novelty, the glare of paradox will be preferred to the light of truth; opinions will be

embraced, not because they are just, but because they are new: the more flagitious, the more subversive of morals, the more alarming to the wise and good, the more welcome to men who estimate their literary powers by the mischief they produce, and who consider the anxiety and terror they impress as the measure of their renown. — ROBERT HALL: *Modern Infidelity Considered; in Works*, vol. i. page 33.

§ 8. THE DREAD OF CONTEMPT AND RIDICULE.

Pride makes men ashamed of the service of God, in a time and place where it is disgraced by the world; and, if it have dominion, Christ and holiness shall be denied or forsaken by them, rather than their honor with men shall be forsaken. If they come to Jesus, it is, as Nicodemus, by night. They are ashamed to own a reproached truth, or scorned cause, or servant of Christ. If men will but mock them with the nicknames or calumnies hatched in hell, they will do as others, or forbear their duty. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Christian Directory; in Practical Works*, vol. iii. p. 23.

A system may be thrown into discredit by the fanaticism and folly of some of its advocates, and it may be long before it emerges from the contempt of a precipitate and unthinking public, ever ready to follow the impulse of her former recollections; it may be long before it is reclaimed from obscurity by the eloquence of future defenders; and there may be the struggle and the perseverance of many years before the existing association, with all its train of obloquies and disgusts and prejudices, shall be overthrown. A lover of truth is thus placed on the right field for the exercise of his principles. It is the field of his faith and of his patience, and in which he is called to a manly encounter with the enemies of his cause. He may have much to bear, and little but the mere force of principle to sustain him. But what a noble exhibition of mind, when this force is enough for it; when, though unsupported by the sympathy of other minds, it can rest on the truth and righteousness of its own principle; when it can select its object from among the thousand entanglements of error, and keep by it amidst all the clamors of hostility and contempt; when all the terrors of disgrace cannot alarm it; when all the levities of ridicule cannot shame it; when all the scowl of opposition cannot overwhelm it! There are some very fine examples of such a contest, and of such a triumph, in the history of philosophy. . . . When Sir

Isaac Newton's theory of gravitation was announced to the world, if it had not the persecution of violence, it had at least the persecution of contempt to struggle with. . . . This kept it for a time from the chairs and universities of Europe; and for years a kind of obscure and ignoble sectarianism was annexed to that name which has been carried down on such a tide of glory to distant ages. Let us think of this, when philosophers bring their names and their authority to bear upon us, when they pour contempt on the truth which we love, and on the system which we defend; and, as they fasten their epithets upon us, let us take comfort in thinking that we are under the very ordeal through which philosophy herself had to pass, before she achieved the most splendid of her victories. — DR. THOMAS CHALMERS: *Select Works*, vol. iv. p. 222.

This, too, is the ordeal through which Unitarianism has passed, and is still, in some measure, passing. This is the ordeal through which have passed the adherents of the great doctrine which confessedly lies at the foundation of all true religion, whether natural or revealed; and which, in spite of a narrow dogmatism and a crude metaphysics, is more or less recognized by all Christian churches. The believers in the strict Oneness of the Divine Being, of the unrivalled Supremacy of the infinite Father, have been subjected to every species of contempt and persecution. Their learning has been despised; their characters have been traduced; their motives maligned; their names associated with irreverence, impiety, and infidelity. But all this obloquy, though certainly presenting no evidence for the truth of their doctrine, affords, at the same time, as little ground for regarding it as erroneous. It should be tried by its own merits; judged of by its harmony or its dissonance with the principles of reason and revelation; and a decision be made of its truth or of its falsity, uninfluenced by the fulminations of bigotry, by the sneers of a cold indifference, or by the clamors and prejudices of an unthinking people.

Men are often kept in error, not because they have any special objection to the truth itself, or to the practical consequences, in general, which result from it, but because they are unwilling to acknowledge that they have been in the wrong. A man who has always been on one side, and is so universally regarded, cannot admit that he has been mistaken, without feeling mortification himself, and exciting the ill-will of others. Light, however, comes in, which he secretly perceives is sufficient to show him that he has been wrong; but he turns his eye away from it, because he instinctively feels what must inevitably follow from its admission. — JACOB ABBOTT: *The Corner-stone; or, a Familiar Illustration of the Principles of Christian Truth*, p. 296.

§ 9. THE INFLUENCE OF A PROUD, EMPTY, SECTARIAN CRITICISM.

Men of high station in the church, and of high reputation for knowledge, should be cautious in what terms, and before what hearers, they pass sentence upon books which they professedly do not deign to read. A specious criticism, begotten, it may be, by rashness upon prejudice, and fostered by vanity or ill-nature, as soon as it was produced, — a random conjecture, suddenly struck out in the conflicts of literary conversation, — a sprightly effusion of wit, forgotten perhaps by the speaker the moment after it was uttered, — a sly and impertinent sneer, intended to convey more than was expressed, and more than could be proved, may have very injurious effects upon the reputation of a writer. I suspect, too, that these effects are sometimes designedly produced by critics, who, finding the easy reception given to their own opinions, prefer the pride of decision to the toil of inquiry. The remarks of such men are eagerly caught up by hearers who are incapable of forming for themselves a right judgment, or desirous of supporting an unfavorable judgment by the sanction of a great name. They are triumphantly repeated in promiscuous, and sometimes, I fear, even in literary assemblies, and, like other calumnies, during a long and irregular course they swell in bulk, without losing any portion of their original malignity. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Dedication to Warburtonian Tracts; in Works*, vol. iii. p. 387.

Our theology may be greatly improved by encouraging among our scholars more freedom and candor of criticism. We have long been dissatisfied with the manner in which the critical department of our literature is conducted. Our theological criticism, especially, ought to be governed by well-established and sure principles, and to breathe a spirit of the utmost candor. It ought to love the truth more than the canons or the symbols. Its reverence for the dead ought not to exceed the limits of sound reason, nor should its tenderness to the living hazard the interests of science. It ought to rise above party sympathies, above popular prejudice. But it is only a small part of our theological criticism which is regulated by these principles. We have many parties in theology, and each school is inclined to extol the writings of its own partisans, and to depreciate the productions of its opponents. There is more severity of criticism with us than with the hard-nerved disputants of Germany; but it is severity against those from whom we are separated by party lines. There is more adulation of authors in this country than in that land of authors; but it is the

adulation of those who are hemmed in with us by the same sectarian limits. Like our political editors and orators, we are too much disposed to speak only well of him that is with us, — only ill of him that is against us: the flattery is too fulsome, the censure too unsparing. It is rare that we find a truly dispassionate and unbiassed criticism, dispensing praise and blame where it is deserved, without fear and without favor, without bitterness and without partiality. It is by no means easy to determine the exact value of a work from any review of it which is given in some of our religious journals; so much allowance are we compelled to make for party predilections, so much severity are we called upon to mitigate, so much adulation to qualify. Now, we ought to have candor enough, independence enough, enough of the liberal spirit of true learning, to rise above so narrow and baneful a policy, and to redeem the character of our national criticism from the extravagance both of flattery and of sarcasm, which has so generally been objected against us. If criticism is to hold any valuable place in subserviency to theological science, it must be more liberal, more discriminating, more moderate in its sectarian partialities, more faithful to the spirit of sound scholarship and fraternal sympathy. — *Bibliotheca Sacra for November*, 1844; vol. i. pp. 753–4.

With much pleasure we make the preceding extract, taken from an excellent article, prepared by a society of clergymen, on "the State of Theological Science and Education in our Country." In the present age, when the pulpit has, both for good and evil, lost so much of its former power, and the press is the main instrument employed in influencing the public mind, we know of nothing more detrimental to catholicity of spirit and the love of truth among the people than that narrowness of soul, on the part of editors, which, by its withering scowl on all that is excellent out of its own pale, would prevent the readers of a professedly religious journal from perusing any work that bears not the stamp of a prevalent and a stereotyped orthodoxy. Truth is divine, wherever found, — in friend or foe; and it should be the delight of the Christian critic to separate it from the error with which it may be blended, and to exhibit its beauty and holiness, without any bigoted regards to his own particular form of theological speculation.

§ 10. The Seductions of Feeling and Imagination, of Impressions and Passions.

Sometimes a strong, deluded imagination maketh men exceeding confident in error, — some by melancholy, and some by a natural weakness of reason, and strength of fantasy; and some, by misappre-

hensions in religion, grow to think that every strong conceit which doth but come in suddenly, at reading, or hearing, or thinking on such a text, or in time of earnest prayer, especially if it deeply affect themselves, is certainly some suggestion or inspiration of God's Spirit. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Knowledge and Love Compared*, vol. xv. page 158.

Those who are subject to the command of their own affections judge more according to the inclinations of them than to the dictates of right reason. He that espouses a party or interest, that loves an opinion, and desires it should be true, easily approves of whatsoever does but seem to make for it, and rejects, almost at all adventures, whatsoever appears against it. How does the hope and desire of honor or favor or fortune in the world carry men away to the vilest things for the prosecution of it! And so all the other passions of the mind, whether it be fear or pleasure, or whatever else be the affection that rules us: they hinder the reason from judging aright, and weighing impartially what is delivered to us; and it is great odds but such an auditor receives or condemns the doctrine of Christ, not according as the authority of Holy Scripture and the evidence of right reason require he should, but as his own passions and inclinations prompt him to do! — ARCHBISHOP WAKE: *Sermons and Discourses*, pp. 17–19.

To assign a feeling and a determination of will, as a satisfactory reason for embracing or rejecting this or that opinion or belief, is of ordinary occurrence, and sure to obtain the sympathy and the suffrages of the company. And yet to me this seems little less irrational than to apply the nose to a picture, and to decide on its genuineness by the sense of smell. — S. T. COLERIDGE: *Aids to Reflection; in Works*, vol. i. p. 119.

It is perfectly notorious that the great mass of those who adopt even the purest forms of faith adopt it without any rational examination of evidence, whether of natural or revealed truth. The appeal to natural impressions, however just in itself, throws no light whatever on the real question at issue, which concerns not what men are led to believe, but the rational evidence on which they believe it; not what are the natural impressions, but how and why they should be impressed. And this more especially with reference to the analysis of our own convictions, and the searching inquiry which we ought to make into the grounds of our own belief, with all the light and information we possess, in order that, on the most vitally important of all subjects, these convictions should be guarded by none but the most secure

arguments, and repose on none but the most unassailable foundations. But the majority of those who decry this kind of inquiry do so upon a more specific ground of faith. They, in fact, discard all idea of reasoning upon the subject. They look to a peculiar kind of impression upon the soul, neither to be reasoned upon nor resisted. In this their whole apprehension of the Deity is made to consist. Thus all philosophical proof is useless, and even dangerous; all exercise of the intellect on such a subject is at variance with the demands of a true faith. With those who entertain such persuasions, it is of course vain to dispute. Discarding reason, they are insensible to fallacies in argument. — BADEN POWELL: *Connection of Natural and Divine Truth*, pp. 222–3.

[1] It is quite certain that most men are disposed to believe or disbelieve according to their wishes. Even the wisest men are not exempt from this bias of the judgment, unless they are carefully on their guard against it; and the generality may be observed on many occasions mustering every argument they can think of to persuade themselves of the truth of what is agreeable, and raising every objection against any thing which they do not like to believe. . . . . [2] There are persons . . . who, in supposed compliance with the precept, "Lean not to thine own understanding," regard it as a duty to suppress all exercise of the intellectual powers, in every case where the feelings are at variance with the conclusions of reason. They deem it right to "consult the heart more than the head;" *i. e.* to surrender themselves, advisedly, to the bias of any prejudice that may chance to be present: thus, deliberately and on principle, burying in the earth the talent entrusted to them, and hiding under a bushel the candle that God has lighted up in the mind. . . . I am far from recommending presumptuous inquiries into things beyond the reach of our faculties, attempts to be "wise above what is written," or groundless confidence in the certainty of our conclusions. But we cannot even exercise the requisite humility in acquiescing in revealed doctrines, unless we employ our reason to ascertain what they are; and there is surely at least as much presumption in measuring every thing by our own feelings, passions, and prejudices, as by our own reasonings. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

That portion of Dr. WHATELY'S remarks numbered [1] is taken from "Sermons on Various Subjects," p. 318; that which is numbered [2], from "Essays on the Difficulties in St. Paul's Writings," Essay I. § 3, pp. 24–5

§ 11. HINDRANCES IN GENERAL.

There is, in many minds, a native and almost invincible prepossession in favor of all that is accredited, or ancient, or associated with dignity and high station. It may be a physical propensity; it may be an intellectual weakness; it may be a moral sentiment, estimable and virtuous in its affinities, but in itself unintelligent, and liable to much perversion. There is in others a contempt of authority, — a fierce independency of action, — which may be equally injurious, when carried to excess. . . . There is a constitutional churchmanship, and there is a constitutional sectarianism; and they are both equally contemptible and worthless. Our business is to preserve the habits of our mind, to the last practicable extent, free from the perversions of either class, and to follow truth alone wherever it may lead us; making candid allowance for the failings and errors of other men, but using the most vigorous exertions to surmount our own. — DR. ROBERT S. M'ALL: *Discourses*, vol. i. p. 253.

In some good men the imagination is so inordinately predominant, that they are so governed by taste and poetry as to be almost insensible to the force of logic. Others are so impelled by imaginative emotions, that they have no affinity for enlarged, calm, and comprehensive logical views. In others the association of ideas has imparted to every thing that has been, during their education, linked in with the system of the gospel, such an aspect of holiness, that even errors are invested with all the sacredness of the truths with which they have been associated. Not only the church of Rome, but all state churches and great denominational organizations, exert an influence upon the standing and means of support of all their members, so powerful that it tends to arrest or overrule the free action of the logical power, by an influence which is, in its essential nature, rather intimidating than illuminating or reasoning. In others, emotions of reverence and gratitude to great and good men of past ages, emotions in themselves very proper, are so inordinate as to render them incapable of admitting that any of their views can be erroneous. National prejudices, moreover, and denominational commitments, and the general state of society in any age, exert a great control over the action of the logical power. — DR. EDWARD BEECHER: *Conflict of Ages*, p. 200.

CHAPTER III.

REASON AND REVELATION THE ONLY LEGITIMATE STANDARDS OF RELIGIOUS DOCTRINE.

SECT. I. — THE OBLIGATION TO USE THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

All-sacred Reason! source and soul of all,
Demanding praise on earth, or earth above!

EDWARD YOUNG.

THIS pretence of a necessity of humbling the understanding is none of the meanest arts whereby some persons have invaded and have usurped a power over men's faith and consciences.... He that submits his understanding to all that he knows God hath said, and is ready to submit to all that he hath said, if he but know it, denying his own affections and ends and interests and human persuasions, laying them all down at the foot of his great Master Jesus Christ, — that man hath brought his understanding into subjection, and every proud thought into the obedience of Christ; and this is "the obedience of faith" which is the duty of a Christian. — JEREMY TAYLOR: *Liberty of Prophesying*, sect. ii. 13; *in Whole Works*, vol. vii. p. 468.

When we say God hath revealed any thing, we must be ready to prove it, or else we say nothing. If we turn off reason here, we level the best religion in the world with the wildest and most absurd enthusiasms. And it does not alter the case much to give reason ill names, to call it "blind and carnal reason."... For our parts, we apprehend no manner of inconvenience in having reason on our side; nor need we desire a better evidence that any man is in the wrong, than to hear him declare against reason, and thereby to acknowledge that reason is against him.... Some men seem to think, that they oblige God mightily by believing plain contradictions; but the matter is quite otherwise. — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermon* 56; *in Works*, vol. iv. pp. 300–1.

Is it not intolerable presumption for men to mould and shape religion according to their fancies and humors, and to stuff it with an infinite number of orthodox propositions, none of which are to be found in express terms in Scripture, but are only pretended to be deduced from thence by such imaginary consequences, from some little hints and appearances of things? Especially, is not this unpardonable in those men who cry down reason for such a profane and carnal thing as must not presume to intermeddle in holy matters, and yet lay down the foundation of their religion, and erect such glorious and magnificent fabrics, on nothing else but some little shows and appearances of reason? But the plain truth is this, when men argue from the nature of God and his works and providences, from the nature of mankind, and those eternal notions of good and evil, and the essential differences of things, — that is, when men argue from plain and undeniable principles, which have an immutable and unchangeable nature, and so can bear the stress and weight of a just consequence, — this is carnal reason; but when they argue from fancies and imaginations, which have no stable nature, from some pretty allusions, and similitudes, and allegories, which have no certain shape nor form, but what every man's fancy gives them, — this is sanctified and spiritual reason; but why I cannot imagine, unless that it so much resembles ghosts and shadows, which have nothing solid and substantial in them. — DR. WILLIAM SHERLOCK: *Knowledge of Christ*, chap. iii. sect. 3.

There are those who do not scruple to say, the more contradictions the better; the greater the struggle and opposition of reason, the greater is the triumph and merit of our faith. But there is no likelihood of suppressing any of our doubts or disputes in religion this way; for, besides the natural propension of the soul to the search of truth, and the strong and impatient desire we have to know as much as ever we can of what immediately concerns us, it is generally and very justly looked upon both as the privilege and duty of man to inquire and examine before he believes or judges, and never to give up his assent to any thing but upon good and rational grounds. . . . It is well the difficulties of subduing the understanding are too great to be mastered; for a slight reflection will serve to convince us, that the necessary consequences of a blind resignation of judgment would be far more fatal to Christianity than all our present divisions. What blasphemies and contradictions may and have been imposed upon men's belief, under the venerable name of "mysteries"? and how easy are villanous practices derived from an absurd faith? . . . . . Another condition necessary to

render a thing capable of being believed is, that it implies no contradiction to our former knowledge. I cannot conceive how it is possible to give our assent to any thing that contradicts the plain dictates of our reason, and those evident principles from whence we derive all our knowledge. . . . It is not consistent with the justice, wisdom, or goodness of God to require us to believe that which, according to the frame and make he has given us, it is impossible for us to believe; for, however some men have advanced this absurd paradox that God can make contradictions true, I am very certain, that, upon an impartial trial of their faculties, they would find it were perfectly out of their power to believe explicitly, and in the common sense of the terms, that a part can be bigger than the whole it is a part of. — DR. ROBERT SOUTH: *Considerations on the Trinity*, pp. 2, 3; 16, 17.

It is the true remark of an eminent man, who had made many observations on human nature, "If reason be against a man, a man will always be against reason." This has been confirmed by the experience of all ages. Very many have been the instances of it in the Christian as well as the heathen world; yea, and that in the earliest times. Even then there were not wanting well-meaning men, who, not having much reason themselves, imagined that reason was of no use in religion; yea, rather, that it was a hindrance to it. And there has not been wanting a succession of men who have believed and asserted the same thing. But never was there a greater number of these in the Christian church, at least in Britain, than at this day. Among them that despise and vilify reason, you may always expect to find those enthusiasts who suppose the dreams of their own imagination to be revelations from God. We cannot expect that men of this turn will pay much regard to reason. Having an infallible guide, they are very little moved by the reasonings of fallible men. . . . If you oppose reason to these, when they are asserting propositions ever so full of absurdity and blasphemy, they will probably think it a sufficient answer to say, "Oh! this is your reason," or "your carnal reason." So that all arguments are lost upon them: they regard them no more than stubble or rotten wood. — JOHN WESLEY: *Sermon* 75; *in Works*, vol. ii. p. 126.

No enlightened Christian would be disposed to deprecate with wanton contempt, or from false humility, the powers of reason, because he must consider those powers as the gracious gift of God himself; as the distinguishing characteristic of our own nature, and the necessary instruments both of our intellectual and spiritual improvement. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Sermon on Faith; in Works*, vol. v. p. 354.

It seems to me, that, of all faults, this [an unsubmissive understanding] is the most difficult to define or to discern; for who shall say where the understanding ought to submit itself, unless where it is inclined to advocate any thing immoral? We know that what in one age has been called the spirit of rebellious reason, has in another been allowed by all good men to have been nothing but a sound judgment exempt from superstition. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Letter* 20; *in Life and Correspondence*, p. 69.

There is not necessarily any real humility in a disparagement of the human understanding, — the intellectual powers, as contrasted with the affections and other feelings. "The pride of human reason" is a phrase very much in the mouth of some persons, who seem to think they are effectually humbling themselves by feeling, or sometimes by merely professing, an excessive distrust of all exercise of the intellect, while they resign themselves freely to the guidance of what they call the heart; that is, their prejudices, passions, inclinations, and fancies. But the feelings are as much a part of man's constitution as his reason: every part of our nature will equally lead us wrong if operating uncontrolled. . . . It may be observed, by the way, that the persons who use this kind of language never do, in fact, divest themselves of any human advantages they may chance to possess. Whatever learning or argumentative powers any of them possess (and some of them do possess much), I have always found them ready to put forth, in any controversy they may be engaged in, without showing much tenderness for an opponent who may be less gifted. It is only when learning and argument make against them, that they declaim against the pride of intellect, and depreciate an appeal to reason when its decision is unfavorable. So that the sacrifice which they appear to make is one which in reality they do not make, but only require, when it suits their purpose, from others. . . . They appear voluntarily divesting themselves of what many would feel a pride in; and thus often conceal from others, as well as from themselves, the spiritual pride with which they not only venerate their own feelings and prejudices, but even load with anathemas all who presume to dissent from them. It is a prostration, not of man's self before God, but of one part of himself before another. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Dangers arising from Injudicious Preaching; in Essays on Dangers to Christian Faith*, pp. 59–62.

All who insist upon a blind faith only show the feebleness and timidity of their faith. Nay, at the very moment when they are calling upon mankind to cast down their understandings before what

they assert to be an incomprehensible mystery, there is no little self-exaltation in assuming that their own understandings are the measure of human capacity, and that what to them is obscure and perplexing must needs be so for ever to all mankind. — JULIUS CHARLES HARE: *The Victory of Faith*, pp. 63–4.

We dissent, on the other hand, very widely from those who are in the habit of decrying reason, and of uttering strong reproaches against her, as though she were the great corrupter of the human race, and the determined opposer and enemy of revelation. Things like these we have heard and read, to our deep regret and utter astonishment; and we would fain put all the friends of evangelical sentiment on their guard against uttering or countenancing them. Nothing can be farther from the truth than that revelation requires us to abandon reason. Nay, so far is the case from this, that revelation addresses itself, first of all, to the faculty of reason. It is admitted, on all hands, that the Bible does not *prove* the being of a God: it assumes this truth, as already known and conceded. . . . What is it that weighs and compares the various testimonies and evidences that a God exists, and that he has revealed himself in the Scriptures; and then deduces conclusions from this? Reason. What is it which ascertains the laws of interpretation for that book which professes to be a revelation from God? Reason. What determines that God has not members of a physical body like our own, when the Bible seems to ascribe them to him? Reason. . . . Reason, then, is our highest and ultimate source of appeal in the judgment that we form of things which are fundamental in regard to religion. Even if a revelation were to be made to us in particular, we must appeal to reason to judge whether the evidences of its reality were sufficient. Such being most plainly the fact, we can never join with those who think they are doing God service when they decry the faculty of reason; a faculty which we regard as one of the highest and noblest proofs that our nature was formed in the image of God. Shall we say, now, that reason can never be trusted; that she is always so dark, so erring, that we can have no confidence in her decisions? If so, then why should we trust her decisions in favor of the being of a God, or of his spiritual nature, or of his moral attributes, or of the truth of revelation? If reason does not decide in favor of all these and many more truths, then what is the faculty of our nature which does decide? and is that other faculty any more secure against error than the faculty of reason? — *Spirit of the Pilgrims for April*, 1828; vol. i. pp. 204–5

There are limits to the duty of faith in alleged mysteries. If there were not, there could be no defence against absurdities the most gross, promulgated under the cover of the Bible. The advocates of transubstantiation take refuge behind the shield of mystery; but all Protestants agree in the decision, that a dogma which does violence to the intuitive convictions of the human mind, through the senses, shall not be sheltered by the plea of mystery and faith. So there are certain first truths on which all reasoning rests. Without them, we cannot evince the being of a God, or establish the divine origin or authority of the Bible. The intuitive convictions of the human mind as to honor and right are of no less authority. Without them, we could form no idea of the moral character of God. If any statements are directly at war with these, the resort to mystery and faith, in their defence, is not legitimate. — DR. EDWARD BEECHER: *Conflict of Ages*, p. 129.

He [Christ] always respected reason in man, and addressed himself frankly and magnanimously to man's free will, teaching everywhere that when we neglect those faculties given us by nature for perceiving the truth, we judge falsely of true religion, and involve ourselves in disgraceful inconsistencies. For examples, consult Matt. xii. 9–12. Luke xiv. 1–6. Matt. xxiii. 16–33, &c. In reading the whole history of Christ's life and instructions, we cannot fail to be struck with astonishment and delight at the carefulness with which he ever honored the freedom and capacities of the human mind; in all cases seeking to create rational convictions, and never employing coercion aside from the constraints of love. — E. L. MAGOON: *Repub. Christianity*, p. 144.

Let us ever beware of the sin and folly of disparaging the reason. It is the only high and godlike endowment possessed by us, — the only attribute in which man still bears the image of his Maker. Seek not to degrade and humble it; but bow in willing submission to its rightful authority. It is the voice of God speaking within you. Every one of its utterances carries with it the divine sanction. Whatever we learn from other sources is at best but knowledge at second hand. It has authority, and demands our reception and confidence only as it comes with credentials recognized by the intelligence. Veil this light within, and you have nothing without but mist and obscurity. Extinguish it, and you are at once and for ever enveloped in profound darkness. Disparage the reason, deny its paramount authority, and you cut off the only arm by which you hold on to the plank of truth floating upon a boundless ocean of possibilities. From the free air

and sunlight of day, you go down, down into the gloomy depths of a fathomless, bottomless scepticism. . . . If your faith be in conflict with the clearly ascertained laws of nature, or the well-established principles of science, — which are only the inductions of a larger experience, — you will do well to modify it. If you continue the unequal contest, you are sure in the end to be beaten. The ever-active spirit of investigation, and the continually growing developments of knowledge resulting from it, cannot be restrained by the fetters of a creed. As well might you hope to bind leviathan with threads of gossamer, or stop the fiery steed to which the car has been harnessed by modern invention, by placing your hand upon it, or by simply looking at it. Interpretation has always, in the end, yielded to the demands of advancing science, however long it has struggled against them; and it always must yield. Nor are the interests of piety and religion in danger of permanently suffering from it. The truth, although for a time depressed, it may be, at length, detached from the leaden weight of error that bore it down, is seen floating still more buoyantly upon the surface. Resist not progress in any of the paths of human inquiry. There is surely everywhere need enough of more knowledge. If the light pain you, it is because your eyes are weak or diseased. Give the necessary attention to them; but do not attempt to put out the sun. In your zeal for the interests of Christian truth, do not exalt the Scriptures at the expense of the reason. Remember that the latter is the elder daughter of Heaven. At least, pay her equal honors. — DR. GEO. L. CHACE: *Relation of Divine Providence to Physical Laws*, pp. 41–4.

When preparing the way for others to receive mysterious and unintelligible dogmas, it is not unusual for some religionists to depreciate that reason which God has graciously bestowed on man, by a process of argumentation, such as it is, which implies that they do not consider it altogether unworthy of respect; and to represent Unitarians as deifying their intellectual powers, because they aim at testing the truth of theological opinions by an appeal to the principles of reason; thus betraying their own fears, that, if tried at the bar of that divine judge, the doctrines which they propound would be found wanting in evidence sufficient to establish their truth. The sentiments, however, quoted in this and the next section, are of a far different and more honorable character, and are perfectly accordant with the principles held by all Unitarians. But if, as we believe, they are founded in truth, and if the doctrines of reputed Orthodoxy are opposed to the dictates of reason, as we will hereafter show from the confessions of eminent Trinitarians, — then, because reason and revelation, proceeding equally from the Father of lights, cannot be repugnant, should these doctrines be rejected as unworthy the credence of rational men or of enlightened Christians.

SECT. II. — REASON AND REVELATION CONSISTENT WITH EACH OTHER.

An opinion hath spread itself very far in the world, as if the way to be ripe in faith were to be raw in wit and judgment; as if reason were an enemy unto religion, childish simplicity the mother of ghostly and divine wisdom. — RICHARD HOOKER.

God never offers any thing to any man's belief, that plainly contradicts the natural and essential notions of his mind; because this would be for God to destroy his own workmanship, and to impose that upon the understanding of man, which, whilst it remains what it is, it cannot possibly admit. For instance, we cannot imagine that God should reveal to any man any thing that plainly contradicts the essential perfections of the divine nature; for such a revelation can no more be supposed to be from God, than a revelation from God, that there is no God; which is a downright contradiction. — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermon* 56; *in Works*, vol. iv. p. 296.

Though some deluded men may tell you, that faith and reason are such enemies that they exclude each other as to the same object, and that the less reason you have to prove the truth of the things believed, the stronger and more laudable is your faith; yet, when it cometh to the trial, you will find that faith is no unreasonable thing, and that God requireth you to believe no more than you have sufficient reason for to warrant you and bear you out, and that your faith can be no more than is your perception of the reasons why you should believe; and that God doth suppose reason when he infuseth faith, and useth reason in the use of faith. They that believe, and know not why, or know no sufficient reason to warrant their belief, do take a fancy, an opinion, or a dream, for faith. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Christian Directory; in Practical Works*, vol. ii. p. 171.

Right reason, no less than Scripture, proceeds from God, and is as a light set up for our use, by which we are enabled to discern truth from error. It is incredible that divine revelation should ever be repugnant to reason, or that any thing should be philosophically true which is theologically false; for, since reason, as well as revelation, is the gift of Heaven, God would be opposed to himself if these were inimical. Light is not contrary to light, but the one is greater than the other. Revelation does not destroy, but perfect, reason: what the latter is of itself unable to discover, the former being superadded clearly perceives. — LIMBORCH: *Theologia Christiana*, lib. i. cap. 12, § 4.

It is blasphemy to think, that God can contradict himself; and therefore right reason being the voice of God, as well as revelation, they can never be directly contradictory to one another. — DR. ROBERT SOUTH: *Considerations on the Trinity*, p. 18.

There are many, it is confessed, particularly those who are styled mystic divines, that utterly decry the use of reason in religion; nay, that condemn all reasoning concerning the things of God, as utterly destructive of true religion. But we can in no wise agree with this. We find no authority for it in Holy Writ. So far from it, that we find there both our Lord and his apostles continually reasoning with their opposers. — JOHN WESLEY: *Works*, vol. v. p. 12.

It will not be easy for missionaries of any nation to make much impression on the Pagans of any country; because missionaries in general, instead of teaching a simple system of Christianity, have perplexed their hearers with unintelligible doctrines not expressly delivered in Scripture, but fabricated from the conceits and passions and prejudices of men. Christianity is a rational religion: the Romans, the Athenians, the Corinthians, and others, were highly civilized, far advanced in the rational use of their intellectual faculties; and they all, at length, exchanged Paganism for Christianity. The same change will take place in other countries, as they become enlightened by the progress of European literature, &c. — BISHOP WATSON: *Anecdotes of his Life*, p. 198.

The light of revelation, it should be remembered, is not opposite to the light of reason; the former presupposes the latter; they are both emanations from the same source; and the discoveries of the Bible, however supernatural, are addressed to the understanding, the only medium of information whether human or divine. Revealed religion is not a cloud which overshadows reason: it is a superior illumination designed to perfect its exercise, and supply its deficiencies. Since truth is always consistent with itself, it can never suffer from the most enlarged exertion of the intellectual powers, provided those powers be regulated by a spirit of dutiful submission to the oracles of God. — ROBERT HALL: *Address in behalf of the Baptist Academical Institution at Stepney; in Works*, vol. ii. p. 441.

The doctrine which cannot stand the test of rational investigation cannot be true. . . . We have gone too far when we have said, "Such and such doctrines should not be subjected to rational investigation, being doctrines of pure revelation." I know no such doctrines in the Bible. The doctrines of this book are doctrines of eternal reason,

and they are revealed because they are such. Human reason could not have found them out; but, when revealed, reason can both apprehend and comprehend them. It sees their perfect harmony among themselves, their agreement with the perfections of the divine nature, and their sovereign suitableness to the nature and state of man: thus reason approves and applauds. Some men, it is true, cannot reason; and therefore they declaim against reason, and proscribe it in the examination of religious truth. — DR. ADAM CLARKE: *Commentary*, vol. vi. last page.

It is not scriptural, but fanatical, to oppose faith to reason. Faith is properly opposed to sense, and is the listening to the dictates of the higher part of our mind, to which alone God speaks, rather than to the lower part of us, to which the world speaks. There is no end to the mischiefs done by that one very common and perfectly unscriptural mistake of opposing faith and reason, or whatever you choose to call the highest part of man's nature. And this you will find that the Scripture never does; and observing this, cuts down at once all Pusey's nonsense about rationalism; which, in order to be contrasted scripturally with faith, must mean the following some lower part of our nature. whether sensual or merely intellectual; that is, some part which does not acknowledge God. But what he abuses as rationalism is just what the Scripture commends as knowledge, judgment, understanding, and the like; that is, not the following a merely intellectual part of our nature, but the sovereign part; that is, the moral reason acting under God, and using, so to speak, the telescope of faith for objects too distant for its naked eye to discover. And to this is opposed, in scriptural language, folly and idolatry and blindness, and other such terms of reproof. According to Pusey, the forty-fourth chapter of Isaiah is rationalism, and the man who bowed down to the stock of a tree was a humble man, who did not inquire, but believe. But if Isaiah be right, and speaks the words of God, then Pusey, and the man who bowed down to the stock of a tree, should learn that God is not served by folly. . . . . Faith without reason is not properly faith, but mere power-worship; and power-worship may be devil-worship; for it is reason which entertains the idea of God, — an idea essentially made up of truth and goodness, no less than of power. . . . If this were considered, men would be more careful of speaking disparagingly of reason, seeing that is the necessary condition of the existence of faith. It is quite true, that, when we have attained to faith, it supersedes reason; we walk by sunlight, rather than by moonlight; following the guidance

of infinite reason, instead of finite. But how are we to attain to faith? — in other words, how can we distinguish God's voice from the voice of evil? for we must distinguish it to be God's voice, before we can have faith in it. We distinguish it, and can distinguish it no otherwise, by comparing it with that idea of God which reason intuitively enjoys; the gift of reason being God's original revelation of himself to man. Now, if the voice which comes to us from the unseen world agree not with this idea, we have no choice but to pronounce it not to be God's voice; for no signs of power, in confirmation of it, can alone prove it to be God's. God is not power only, but power and truth and holiness; and the existence of even infinite power does not necessarily involve in it truth and holiness also. . . . . It is no less true, that, while there is, on the one side, a faculty higher than the understanding, which is entitled to pronounce upon its defects, . . . so there is a clamor often raised against it, not from above, but from below, — the clamor of mere shallowness and ignorance and passion. Of this sort is some of the outcry which is raised against rationalism. Men do not leap, *per saltum mortalem*, from ordinary folly to divine wisdom; and the foolish have no right to think they are angels, because they are not humanly wise. There is a deep and universal truth in St. Paul's words, where he says, that Christians wish "not to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life." Wisdom is gained, not by renouncing or despising the understanding, but by adding to its perfect work the perfect work of reason; and of reason's perfection, faith. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Letter* 143, *in Life and Correspondence*, p. 286; and *Miscellaneous Works*, pp. 266–7, 270.

God is the original of natural truth, as well as of that which comes by particular revelation. No proposition, therefore, which is repugnant to the fundamental principles of reason can be the sense of any part of the word of God. — THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE: *Introduction to the Holy Scriptures*, vol. i. p. 356.

Too many have not scrupled to affirm, that the truths of reason are at variance with those of revelation; that the volume of nature and the volume of history contradict the volume of God's word; and that the only way of cleaving to the last is to close and fling away the other two. Yet this is impossible. Man cannot disbelieve that which the legitimate exercise of all his faculties compels him to acknowledge. He is so framed that reason is the lord of his mind, and intellectually he must obey it. — JULIUS CHARLES HARE: *Mission of the Comforter*, vol. i. p. 204

We allow that the reason and conscience of man are to judge of that [the Christian] revelation, so far as its truths come within the domain of conscious knowledge. In saying this, we speak with the utmost distinctness. We are not exalting reason above revelation; we are not speaking of a self-sufficient reason, but of a reason joined with devout affections, and enlightened by the Spirit of Truth. It is too often the folly of Christian divines, in decrying a false reason, to speak disparagingly of all rational power, and thus make revelation unreasonable. But it is, first of all, untrue, and cuts away the foundation of Christianity. It puts out the eye by which we see the light. If the mind could have no idea of God, it could not receive the truth of God in his Son Jesus Christ; if the conscience have no perception of moral sight, it could not recognize the perfect holiness of our Lord, or the obligation of duty to him; if the soul have no thought or longing after immortality, his resurrection and gift of eternal life are robbed of their power. — *Church Review for Jan.* 1855; vol. vii. pp. 504–5.

The quotations in this section have been made, not for the purpose of showing that the dictates of reason, and the teachings of each and of all portions of Scripture, are entirely coincident one with another, but merely that whatever has been *revealed* by God through the utterances or the writings of inspired men never has contradicted, and never can contradict, the judgments which are formed by a proper use of the intellectual powers. The revelations which are recorded in the Bible as having been made to the Hebrews by Moses and the prophets, and to mankind by Jesus and his apostles, unquestionably afford us higher and clearer views of the will and character of Almighty God, and of our relation to him and the great family of rational beings, than were ever reached by men of the loftiest order of intellect, when unaided by supernatural light from Heaven. But, when these revelations are brought home to the human mind, they must either be felt to harmonize with the laws of our common reason, or must go to prove that the faculty of our nature which discerns the alleged revelations to have come from God is unworthy of our confidence; thus destroying, as it were, the very foundation of our faith in a supernatural message. If, therefore, any professedly divine communication, though sounding in our ears from the vault of the eternal heavens, or borne to us by the holiest and highest of divine messengers, were found to proclaim doctrines derogatory to God, or inimical to the principles which lie embedded in the constitution of our moral and mental nature, we could have no assurance that they came from the Author of wisdom and of every good and perfect gift. In such circumstances, indeed, we might make a feint of surrendering our understandings; but, in the very act of retractation, and in opposition to all the forces of our will, we should feel compelled to say, with the poet, that —

"When Faith is virtue, Reason makes it so."

SECT. III. — HOLY WRIT SUFFICIENT, WITHOUT THE DICTA OF CHURCHES OR OF INDIVIDUALS, TO BE A RULE OF FAITH AND COMMUNION.

> [Our] champions are the Prophets and Apostles;
> [Our] weapons, holy saws of Sacred Writ.
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

§ 1. SUFFICIENCY OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. — *Articles of the Church of England*, Art. 6.

All synods or councils, since the apostles' times, whether general or particular, may err, and many have erred: therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith or practice, but to be used as an help in both. . . . . The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the word of God, the only rule of faith and obedience. — WESTMINSTER DIVINES: *Confession of Faith*, chap. xxxi. 4; and *Larger Catechism*, Quest. 3.

All Protestants agree that the Scripture is sufficient to salvation, and contains in it all things necessary to it. — ARCHBISHOP LAUD: *Conf. with Fisher*, p. 34; *as quoted in Short and Safe Expedient.*

If ministers, or councils called general, do err and contradict the word of God, we must do our best to discern it; and, discerning it, must desert their error rather than the truth of God. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Christian Directory*, part i. chap. iv. 10; *in Practical Works*, vol. ii. p. 554.

No true Protestant considers him [Luther], or any of the Reformers, as either apostle or evangelist. It is a fundamental principle with such to call no man upon the earth *master;* knowing that we have one Master, one only infallible Teacher, in heaven, who is Christ. All human teachers are no further to be regarded, than they appear, to the best of our judgment, on impartial examination, to be his interpreters, and to speak his words. The right of private judgment, in opposition to all human claims to a dictatorial authority in matters of faith, is a point so essential to Protestantism, that, were it to be given up, there would be no possibility of eluding the worst reproaches with

which the Romanist charges the Reformation; namely, schism, sedition, heresy, rebellion, and I know not what. But if our Lord, the great Author and Finisher of the faith, had ever meant that we should receive implicitly its articles from any human authority, he would never have so expressly prohibited our calling any man upon the earth master, leader, or guide. — DR. GEO. CAMPBELL: *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, Lect. 28.

We must not, if we would profit by the examples of Christ and his apostles, refer the people as a decisive authority, on the essential and immutable points of Christian faith and duty, to the declarations or decrees of any class or body of fallible men, — of any who have not sensibly miraculous proofs of inspiration to appeal to. Whether it be to a council or to a church that reference is made, — whether to ancient or to later Christian writers, — whether to a great or to a small number of men, however learned, wise, and good, — in all cases the broad line of distinction between inspired and uninspired must never be lost sight of. . . . . "When they shall say unto you, Lo, here! or Lo, there! believe it not." "If they shall say, Behold! he is in the secret chambers" (of some conclave or council of divines), "or, Behold! he is in the wilderness" (inspiring some enthusiastic and disorderly pretender to a new light), "go not after them." Whether they fix on this or that particular church as the abode of such inspired authority; or on the universal church, — which, again, is to be marked out either as consisting of the numerical majority, or the majority of those who lived within a certain (arbitrarily fixed) period, or a majority of the sound and orthodox believers, *i. e.* of those in agreement with the persons who so designate them, — all these, in their varying opinions as to the seat of the supposed inspired authority, are alike in this, — that they are following no track marked out by Christ or his apostles, but merely their own unauthorized conjectures. While one sets up a golden image in Bethel, and another in Dan, saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel!" all are, in fact, "going astray after their own inventions," and "worshipping the work of their own hands." For, however vehemently any one may decry "the pride of intellect," and the presumption of exercising private judgment, it is plain that that man is setting up, as the absolute and ultimate standard of divine truth, the opinions held by himself or his party, if these are to be the decisive test of what is orthodoxy, and orthodoxy again the test of the genuine church, and the church the authoritative oracle of gospel truth. And yet this slightly circuitous mode of setting up the decrees of fallible

man as the object of religious veneration and faith will often be found to succeed in deluding the unwary. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Essays on Dangers to Christian Faith*, pp. 130–2, 138–40.

We know of no standard but the Bible, — nothing that can serve to show the truth of a religious tenet, except the infallible word of God. Councils may change; Fathers of the church may be mistaken; the Reformers were fallible; and shall we who enjoy the benefit resulting from the light and learning of past ages stand still where they stopped, or appeal to them as our guides, just because they attained to eminence at a time when surrounding circumstances were unfavorable to the progress of truth? We were not made to sleep over the Bible, or to stereotype those principles, civil and religious, which it is the glory of our forefathers to have transmitted to their posterity. While rendering due respect to the Reformers, and honoring the men of past times who defended the great truths lying at the foundation of Christian hope, we regard it as nothing less than Popery in principle — that very thing in essence which we profess to abhor — to call up the names of illustrious dead as the infallible expounders of the Bible, or to give our language the semblance of assuming, that to differ from current opinions is to disown Protestantism and to favor Romanism. When shall the various sections of the Protestant church learn fully, and act out with earnest honesty, the lesson of heaven, "Call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven"? In some instances the Reformers were wrong; in others they were but partially enlightened. They wrote not a few things that cannot be received. Their reasoning is often inconsequential, sometimes absurd; and we should as readily believe in the inspiration of the apocryphal books of the Maccabees as adopt all their opinions with implicit faith. Verily the *principle* of Romanism is of far wider range and more extended influence than the church of Rome. The church of England, with all her excellence, has something of it. Nonconformists have much of it. Its leaven may be seen quietly impregnating the minds of stereotyped Dissenters, in phases and forms innumerable. — DR. SAMUEL DAVIDSON: *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. iii. pp. 512–13.

Any use of a creed, or a constitution, or a church court, or a council, tending to discountenance the free investigation of the Bible on any and every article whether of belief or of practice, or to shield any portion of the church against those changes to which she ever has been and still is constantly liable from the progressive advancement of

biblical knowledge, is a usurpation of the rights of God over the consciences and understandings of men. It is religious despotism under whatever specious forms it may be exercised, and with whatever semblance of earnest contention for the faith once delivered to the saints it may be advocated. — *New Englander for April*, 1844; vol. ii. pp. 207–8.

§ 2. INEFFICACY AND PERNICIOUS RESULTS OF REQUIRING AN ASSENT OR A SUBSCRIPTION TO CREEDS AND ARTICLES OF FAITH.

Their urging of subscription [the urging of subscription by church governors] to their own articles, is but *lacessere et irritare morbos ecclesiæ*, which otherwise would exercise and spend themselves. . . . He seeketh not unity, but division, who exacteth that in words which men are content to yield in action. And it is true there are some which, as I am persuaded, will not easily offend by inconformity, who, notwithstanding, make some conscience to subscribe. — LORD BACON: *Advertisement concerning Controversies; in Works*, vol. ii. p. 418.

The requiring subscriptions to the Thirty-nine Articles is a great imposition. . . . The greater part [of those that serve in the church] subscribe without ever examining them; and others do it because they must do it, though they can hardly satisfy their consciences about some things in them. — BISHOP BURNET: *History of His Own Time*, vol. iv. p. 410.

With respect to the doctrine of the Trinity, as explained by Athanasius or any other man, I cannot look upon it to be so fundamental in religion as to think we should be guilty of sin, in consenting to revise, or even to change it. If in this I differ from some, I have others to support me; nay, I have the great principle of all the Protestant churches in the world in my favor; for it is a principle with them all to admit the fallibility of all human explications of Scripture. Every human explication, then, of the Trinity may be an erroneous explication; and what may be an error cannot and ought not to be imposed as a fundamental Christian verity. — BISHOP WATSON: *Expediency of Revising the Liturgy*, p. 67; *apud Christ. Reformer for June*, 1839.

Subjects purely speculative should be left free. If some are so bold as to determine, — who hath a right so to do, in matters of whose nature, it is generally allowed, no one can have any intuition, perception, or knowledge? Who, then, will presume to say positively what a man is or is not to believe? To attempt an explanation of these

things, or to make men understand them, is equally ridiculous as to bid the blind to see, or the deaf to hear. How necessary it is, therefore, to read the Scripture, that we might with certainty know what we should believe, and might not be loaded with articles, which, if not altogether useless, are indifferent, and will not make us either the wiser or the better! Our time will be more properly employed in learning our duty, than in exercising a vain curiosity after mysteries. Bad actions are worse than erroneous opinions. The latter flow from a weak and mistaken judgment: the former proceed from a wicked and corrupt heart. The one will be forgiven; the other, without repentance, never. . . . . Articles of faith should be few in number, and such as are apparently and absolutely necessary, so that to refuse assent to them would be absurd. — JAMES PENN, B. A., Under-master of Christ's Hospital: *Tracts*, p. 13; *apud Manning's Vindication of Dissent*, pp. 25–6.

A long course of experience has clearly demonstrated the inefficacy of creeds and confessions to perpetuate religious belief. Of this the only faithful depository is not that which is "written with ink," but on the "fleshly tables of the heart." The spirit of error is too subtile and volatile to be held by such chains. Whoever is acquainted with ecclesiastical history must know, that public creeds and confessions have occasioned more controversies than they have composed; and that, when they ceased to be the subject of dispute, they have become antiquated and obsolete. A vast majority of the Dissenters of the present day hold precisely the same religious tenets which the Puritans did two centuries ago, because it is the instruction they have uniformly received from their pastors; and, for the same reason, the articles of the national church are almost effaced from the minds of its members, because they have long been neglected or denied by the majority of those who occupy its pulpits. We have never heard of the church of Geneva altering its confession, but we know that Voltaire boasted there was not in his time a Calvinist in the city; nor have we heard of any proposed amendment in the creed of the Scotch, yet it is certain the doctrines of that creed are preached by a rapidly decreasing minority of the Scottish clergy. From these and similar facts, we may fairly conclude, that the doctrines of the church, with or without subscription, are sure to perpetuate themselves where they are faithfully preached; but that the mere circumstance of their being subscribed will neither secure their being preached nor believed. — ROBERT HALL: *Review of Zeal without Innovation; in Works*, vol. ii. pp. 261–2.

Men may incorporate their doctrines in creeds or articles of faith, and sing them in hymns; and this may be all both useful and edifying, if the doctrine be true: but, in every question which involves the eternal interests of man, the Holy Scriptures must be appealed to, in union with reason, their great commentator. He who forms his creed or confession of faith without these, may believe any thing or nothing, as the cunning of others or his own caprices may dictate. Human creeds and confessions of faith have been often put in the place of the Bible, to the disgrace both of revelation and reason. Let *those* go away, let *these* be retained, whatever the consequence. "Fiat justitia: ruat cœlum." — DR. ADAM CLARKE: *Commentary*, vol. vi. last page.

Who would not shrink from asserting, that a heathen of virtuous life must without doubt perish everlastingly? Still more, who is there that in his heart pronounces endless punishment on the earnest and conscientious man who lives in the faith and love of Christ, but yet is intellectually unable to word his creed in the precise phraseology adopted by the Athanasian formula? . . . It is a public scandal, and very injurious to national morality, that such emphatic words should be solemnly used in our churches, and yet accepted by no one; for, though each man's conscience may be relieved by the consciousness that the dissent from the natural meaning is so universally understood as to deceive no one, the example of such vehement yet really disavowed assertion is grievously calculated to countenance the low morality which prevails regarding public professions. . . . Scripture never intended to reveal to us the real and absolute essence of the divine nature: it could not be grasped by the human understanding. — *North British Review for August*, 1852; Amer. edit. vol. xii. p. 205.

The writer of the preceding paragraph, however, says that "nowhere is the cardinal doctrine of the Trinity expounded with greater felicity and greater power than in the Athanasian Creed." Might we not add, certainly not in the Sacred Scriptures?

In respect to the original right of private judgment, — the right to call in question any human symbols or confessions, and to bring them all to the simple test of God's holy word, — why should it be thought, or even indirectly intimated, that it is presumption and wickedness for any individual now to question the correctness of some opinions defended by Luther and Melancthon, by Zuingle and Calvin, or by Turretin and Gomer? Are there no Christians now who have as much knowledge of the Bible as these men? Are there none who have as high a reverence for it, as much sincere attachment to it?

. . . . . Is it not a matter of wonder, that, after so many experiments utterly unsuccessful, the churches should still continue to expect and demand the accomplishment of that from creeds and councils, and from authority, which never can be brought about except by scriptural reason and argument? Have the Thirty-nine Articles of the English church secured her uniform orthodoxy and evangelical spirit? History, from the time of Archbishop Laud, will answer this question. Have the church of Scotland been made uniform in sentiment by their creed? Look through its history for the last century, and any one may easily learn. Have the Presbyterian churches in England and America been made uniform in their faith by reason of their creed? and are they still of one mind? Alas! we are almost forced to the conclusion that their dissensions have been increased by their symbols; so much is surely true, viz., that, when dissensions have existed, they have been greatly aggravated by the very reason, that accusation for supposed departure from the standards has been rendered more intense and urgent, and has assumed more of the air of authority. . . . Reason, argument — rather I should say, the Scriptures urged by reason and argument — are the only ultimate means to be relied on, so far as means employed by men are concerned. — MOSES STUART, *in Biblical Repository for July*, 1836; vol. viii. pp. 34, 67–8.

Dogmatical propositions, such as are commonly woven into creeds and catechisms of doctrine, have not the certainty they are commonly supposed to have. They only give us the seeing of the authors at the precise standpoint occupied by them at the time, and they are true only as seen from that point; not even there, save in a proximate sense. . . . In the original formation of any creed, catechism, or system of divinity, there is always a latent element of figure, which probably the authors know not of, but without which it is neither true to them nor to anybody. But, in a long course of repetition, the figure dies out, and the formula settles into a literality, and then, if the repetition goes on, it is really an assent to what is not true; for that which was true at the beginning has now become untrue, — and that, however paradoxical it may seem, by being assented to. . . . Considering the infirmities of language, therefore, all formularies of doctrine should be held in a certain spirit of accommodation. They cannot be pressed to the letter, for the very sufficient reason that the letter is never true. They can be regarded only as proximate representations, and should therefore be accepted, not as laws over belief or opinion, but more as badges of consent and good understanding. The moment we begin

to speak of them as guards and tests of purity, we confess that we have lost the sense of purity, and, with about equal certainty, the virtue itself. . . . The greatest objection that I know to creeds — that is, to creeds of a theoretic or dogmatic character — is, that they make so many appearances of division, where there really is none till the appearances make it. They are likely also, unless some debate or controversy sharpens the mind to them and keeps them alive, to die out of meaning, and be assented to at last as a mere jingle of words. Thus we have, in many of our orthodox formulas of Trinity, the phrase, "the same in substance;" and yet how many are there, even of our theologians, to whom it will now seem a heresy to say this with a meaning! And the clause following, "equal in power and glory," will be scarcely less supportable, when a view of Trinity is offered which gives the terms an earnest and real significance. — DR. HORACE BUSHNELL: *God in Christ*, pp. 79–83.

Though creeds are understood neither by their authors nor by any one else, and whatever was true in them originally becomes by repetition untrue, and though they are quite useless as guards and tests of purity of doctrine, Dr. BUSHNELL says (p. 82) that he has been ready to accept as great a number of them as fell in his way.

Creeds fabricated by priestly craft constitute the heaviest and most corroding chain ever fastened on human minds. The inquirer after truth is drawn away from the words and example of the great Teacher, and confused by those who shout around him their own articles so violently, that the voice of the only infallible Master is nearly drowned. And what are these substitutes for the plain teachings of the New Testament but miserable skeletons, freezing abstractions, unintelligible dogmas, as dubious to the understanding as they are repugnant to the heart? The confessions of faith, books of discipline, and creed-concoctions, in general, adopted by most Protestant sects, embody the grand idea of infallibility, as truly as the decrees of Trent and the Vatican; and, if I were compelled to choose between the two, most assuredly would I prefer the despotism of Rome; for that has some historical dignity, if no other merit. — E. L. MAGOON: *Republican Christianity*, pp. 242–3.

So say all true Protestants, extracts from whom might occupy many volumes. But, alas! how frequently amongst those who arrogate to themselves exclusively the title of "Orthodox," are the decisions of fallible councils and erring individuals made the rule of Christian faith and communion!

SECT. IV. — NEED OF REVISING THE AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE BIBLE, AND CORRECTING IT FROM A PURE TEXT.

The hold which the mistranslations of the authorized version [of the Bible] have on the minds of men gives to some ecclesiastical errors a tenacity of life almost indestructible. — *Eclectic Review for June*, 1841.

Depend on it, no truth, no matter of fact fairly laid open, can ever subvert true religion. — RICHARD BENTLEY.

Whenever it shall be thought proper to set forth the Holy Scriptures, for the public use of our church, to better advantage than as they appear in the present English translation, the expediency of which grows every day more and more evident, a revision or correction of that translation may perhaps be more advisable than to attempt an entirely new one. For, as to the style and language, it admits but of little improvement; but, in respect of the sense and the accuracy of interpretation, the improvements of which it is capable are great and numberless. — BISHOP LOWTH: *Translation of Isaiah*, Prel. Diss. p. li.

A new translation of the Scriptures . . . has long been devoutly wished by many of the best friends to religion and our established church, who, though not insensible of the merit of our present version in common use, and justly believing it to be equal to the very best that is now extant in any language, ancient or modern, sorrowfully confess that it is still far from being so perfect as it might and should be; that it often represents the errors of a faulty original with too exact a resemblance; whilst, on the other hand, it has mistaken the true sense of the Hebrew in not a few places; and sometimes substituted an interpretation so obscure and perplexed, that it becomes almost impossible to make out with it any sense at all. And, if this be the case, shall we not be solicitous to obtain a remedy for such glaring imperfections? — DR. BENJAMIN BLAYNEY: *Translation of Jeremiah*, Prel. Disc. p. ix.

As this collation was made by some of the most distinguished scholars in the age of James the First, it is probable that our authorized version is as faithful a representation of the original Scriptures as could have been formed at that period. But when we consider the immense accession which has been since made, both to our critical and to our philological apparatus; when we consider that the whole mass of literature, commencing with the London Polyglot and continued to Griesbach's Greek Testament, was collected subsequently to that

period; when we consider that the most important sources of intelligence for the interpretation of the original Scriptures were likewise opened after that period, — we cannot possibly pretend, that our authorized version does not require amendment. . . . Dr. MACKNIGHT goes so far as to say of our authorized version, "It is by no means such a just representation of the inspired originals as merits to be implicitly relied on for determining the controverted articles of the Christian faith, and for quieting the dissensions which have rent the church." — BISHOP MARSH: *Lectures*, pp. 295–6.

The warmest advocate of our translation cannot pronounce it free from faults, but must acknowledge that there still are in it some wrong interpretations, which either contradict the sense of the original, or obscure it. And can there be any inconvenience or danger in proposing to correct such errors? Would it not be conducive to the advancement of the gospel to remove, if possible, and under just authority, every material error from our publicly received version, for the sake of those who do not understand the original? — BISHOP BURGESS: *Tracts on the Divinity of Christ*, pp. 241–2.

[The common version of the Bible, undertaken by the orders of King James the First, and first published in the year 1611] is level to the understanding of the cottager, and fit to meet the eye of the critic, the poet, and the philosopher. . . . No work has ever been so generally read, or more universally admired; and such is its complete possession of the public mind, that no translation differing materially from it can ever become acceptable in this country. . . . It was [however] not made from corrected or critical texts of the originals, but from the Masoretic Hebrew text, and from the common printed Greek text of the New Testament. Consequently, whatever imperfections belonged to the originals at the time must be expected in the version. . . . That it is capable of improvement will generally be admitted, and that we are in possession of the means by which that improvement could be made is equally unquestionable. — WM. ORME: *Bibliotheca Biblica*, pp. 37–9.

That the text called the *textus receptus*, or received text, is far from supplying such a desideratum [as a new revision of the authorized version of the Bible] will be manifest in considering its origin and quality. That text is no other than the result of the various transcriptural errors, omissions, and additions, very partially and imperfectly corrected, which have accrued to the primitive text, during the thousand obscure ages that intervened between the age of the oldest

surviving manuscript and the invention of printing. . . . . Every one who is very sensitive for the purity and integrity of the evangelical records will feel it to be of the first importance that the English reader should at length be put in possession of the text of the Sacred Volume, purged from the heterogeneous incrustations which its surface has contracted during its passage down the stream of dark and turbid ages. . . . It is imperative that we should at length secure and complete what GRIESBACH had begun, by throwing altogether out of the text every thing apocryphal and spurious, and thus attain to a conformity with primitive Christian antiquity. — GRANVILLE PENN: *Annotations to the Book of the New Covenant*, pp. 18, 47–8.

Respectable and excellent as our common version is, considering the time and circumstances under which it was made, no person will contend that it is incapable of important amendment. A temperate, impartial, and careful revision would be an invaluable benefit to the cause of Christianity; and the very laudable exertions which are now made to circulate the Bible render such a revision, at the present time, a matter of still more pressing necessity. It is a failing of the same kind, when the text of the common Hebrew and Greek editions is adduced as indubitably and in every case the divine original, without any previous consideration or inquiry. . . . Every Christian who is moderately informed on these subjects knows, that the early editions of the original Scriptures could not possess a text so well ascertained as those which the superior means and the diligent industry of modern editors have been enabled to attain; that from these early editions all the established Protestant versions were made; and that an accurate and impartial criticism of the published text, as well as of any translation, must lie at the foundation of all satisfactory deduction of theological doctrine from the words of Scripture. — DR. JOHN PYE SMITH: *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, pp. 39–41.

These extracts, which might easily have been increased by quotations from Dr. DAVID DURELL, Dr. JOHN SYMONDS, Dr. GEORGE CAMPBELL, Archbishop NEWCOME, S. T. COLERIDGE, Dr. THOMAS ARNOLD, and many others, are given chiefly for the purpose of showing, that the dissatisfaction with the received text and common version of the Scriptures, so often manifested by Unitarians, does not involve any irreverence for the word of God; a species of impiety with which they have been often charged. Indeed, none are more accustomed than learned and devout Trinitarians to change the translation of certain passages in the Bible, notwithstanding the superstitious reverence paid by others to the authorized version

SECT. V. — THE SACRED BOOKS NOT INSPIRED RECORDS, BUT RECORDS OF REVELATION.

The law by Moses came;
But peace and truth and love
Were brought by Christ, a nobler name,
Descending from above.

ISAAC WATTS.

§ 1. THE DOGMA OF THE VERBAL OR THE PLENARY INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE NOT SUPPORTED BY EVIDENCE.

If any man is of opinion, that Moses might write the history of those actions which he himself did or was present at, without an immediate revelation of them; or that Solomon, by his natural and acquired wisdom, might speak those wise sayings which are in his Proverbs; or the evangelists might write what they heard and saw, or what they had good assurance of from others, as St. Luke tells he did; or that St. Paul might write for his cloak and parchments at Troas, and salute by name his friends and brethren; or that he might advise Timothy to drink a little wine, &c., without the immediate dictate of the Spirit of God, — he seems to have reason on his side. For that men may, without an immediate revelation, write those things which they think without a revelation, seems very plain. And that they did so, there is this probable argument for it; because we find that the evangelists, in relating the discourses of Christ, are very far from agreeing in the particular expressions and words, though they do agree in the substance of the discourses: but, if the words had been dictated by the Spirit of God, they must have agreed in them. For when St. Luke differs from St. Matthew in relating what our Saviour said, it is impossible that they should both relate it right as to the very words and form of expression; but they both relate the substance of what he said. And, if it had been of concernment that every thing that they wrote should be dictated *ad apicem*, to a tittle, by the Spirit of God, it is of the same concernment still, that the providence of God should have secured the Scriptures since to a tittle from the least alteration; which that it is not done, appears by the various readings both of the Old and New Testament, concerning which no man can infallibly say that this is right, and not the other. It seems sufficient in this matter to assert, that the Spirit of God did reveal to the pen-

men of the Scriptures what was necessary to be revealed; and, as to all other things, that he did superintend them in the writing of it, so far as to secure them from any material error or mistake in what they have delivered. — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermon* 222; *in Works*, vol. xi. pp. 185–6.

In the selection of their arguments, Jesus and the apostles could not at all times confine themselves to those truths which were most convincing to themselves and other really enlightened men; but they were also under the necessity of employing such reasonings as carried most weight with their contemporaries, and certain of their hearers or readers. . . . Hence it is that many of those arguments which the founders of Christianity made use of are not perfectly convincing to us; as, for example, Matt. xxii. 30–32. 2 Cor. iii. 7. 1 Cor. xi. 4–10. Heb. v.—ix.; which contain many arguments of this nature, which were adapted only to the modes of thinking of the Jews. Jesus and the apostles adapted themselves to the modes of thinking chiefly of the Jews, in their citations and applications of passages of the Old Testament, when propounding certain truths of the gospel. This is designated the special accommodation of passages in the Old Testament to the expression of the truths and objects of the New. . . . Thus Jesus applied what had been said by David of Ahithophel to Judas Iscariot, John xiii. 18. In this manner, in Matt. ii. 15–18, are several passages of Scripture applied to Jesus and his history. . . . . As the four evangelists narrate every thing either as they saw and heard it themselves, or as they obtained it from credible eye-witnesses; but as every individual regards an object from his own standing point; so in these narrations they very often vary from one another, so as, however, to coincide in the main. . . . . As to what especially relates to the contradictions which exist between passages of the Old Testament, when it is taken into consideration that the Bible consists of a collection of books, written at various times through a course of many centuries, some of them composed at the earliest periods of the existence of the human race, and all continually transcribed by later copyists, and frequently corrupted in many passages by the hands of correctors, it could scarcely fail to contain contradictions. . . . The religious notions of the primitive race of mankind were universally sensuous and imperfect. They became gradually more pure and perfect. This perfectibility of subjective religion was progressively developed until the time of Christ. When, in the course of time, men had attained clearer and more correct views of divine things,

contradictions must naturally have taken place between men's present and past religious notions. For instance, in the books of Moses, unclean animals are forbidden to be eaten. A voice proclaims to Peter, "Eat of these unclean animals," Acts x. . . . . A round number is often put for a more definite one. Matt. xvii. 1, Jesus took with him his three disciples up the mountain six days after the prediction of his sufferings; but, according to Luke, it happened eight days after (ix. 28): it amounts to one and the same thing. A writer is sometimes accustomed to ascribe to several individuals what took place with respect to but one of them. Thus the thieves on the cross, according to Matthew, reviled Jesus; but, according to Luke, it was only one. The sacred history must be judged of according to the genius of those times. It must be recollected, that their authors were not men of learning; that they were but human beings, and might therefore err; and that it did not seem fit to Divine Wisdom to preserve them by an extraordinary influence from harmless errors in matters of secondary importance. . . . Luke and Mark were not present to hear and see all that Jesus said or did. They therefore narrate what they had received from eye-witnesses, or had read in other histories of the life of Jesus then extant. When they subsequently wrote these down from memory only, this might have easily given rise to a difference in the narrations. — GEORGE FREDERIC SEILER: *Biblical Hermeneutics*, translated by Dr. William Wright, §§ 267–8, 302, 323, 325–6.

We have made this large extract from Dr. SEILER, because, though a German, he was so good a man and so orthodox a divine as to receive the highest encomiums of his translator and of Dr. John Pye Smith. These writers say, that his theological publications, one of which was a work on the Deity of Christ, "are distinguished by their candid and luminous method of examining evidence and discussing difficulties, by their spirit of practical piety, and by their tendency to show the harmony which ever subsists between the highest exertions of reason in all the improvements of science and literature, and the pure religion of the Bible." See Memoir of Seiler, prefixed to Dr. Wright's translation of "Biblical Hermeneutics."

With a full persuasion of soul respecting all the articles of the Christian faith, . . . I receive willingly also the truth of the history; namely, that the word of the Lord did come to Samuel, to Isaiah, to others; and that the words which gave utterance to the same are faithfully recorded. But though the origin of the words, even as of the miraculous acts, be supernatural; yet, the former once uttered, the

latter once having taken their place among the phenomena of the senses, the faithful recording of the same does not of itself imply, or seem to require, any supernatural working, other than as all truth and goodness are such. . . . I believe the writer in whatever he himself relates of his own authority, and of its origin; but I cannot find any such claim, as the doctrine in question [that all that exists in the Sacred Volume was dictated by an infallible Intelligence] supposes, made by these writers, explicitly or by implication. On the contrary, they refer to other documents, and in all points express themselves as sober-minded and veracious writers under ordinary circumstances are known to do. . . . . Say that the Book of Job throughout was dictated by an infallible Intelligence. Then reperuse the book, and still, as you proceed, try to apply the tenet: try if you can even attach any sense or semblance of meaning to the speeches which you are reading. What! were the hollow truisms, the unsufficing half-truths, the false assumptions, and malignant insinuations of the supercilious bigots who corruptly defended the truth; — were the impressive facts, the piercing outcries, the pathetic appeals, and the close and powerful reasoning with which the poor sufferer — smarting at once from his wounds, and from the oil of vitriol which the orthodox *liars for God* were dropping into them — impatiently, but uprightly and holily, controverted this truth, while in will and in spirit he clung to it; — were both dictated by an infallible Intelligence? Alas! if I may judge from the manner in which both indiscriminately are recited, quoted, appealed to, preached upon, by the *routiniers* of desk and pulpit, I cannot doubt that they think so, or rather, without thinking, take for granted that so they are to think. . . . . All the miracles which the legends of monk or rabbi contain can scarcely be put in competition, on the score of complication, inexplicableness, the absence of all intelligible use or purpose, and of circuitous self-frustration, with those that must be assumed by the maintainers of this doctrine, in order to give effect to the series of miracles by which all the nominal composers of the Hebrew nation before the time of Ezra, of whom there are any remains, were successively transformed into automaton compositors, so that the original text should be in sentiment, image, word, syntax, and composition, an exact impression of the divine copy! — S. T. COLERIDGE: *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit; in Works*, vol. v. pp. 583–4, 593–4, 612.

We know that the Catholics look with as great horror on the consequences of denying the infallibility of the church as you [the Rev. John Tucker] can do on those of denying the entire inspiration of the

Scriptures; and that, to come nearer to the point, the inspiration of the Scriptures in points of physical science was once insisted on as stoutly as it is now maintained with regard to history. . . . . It is strange to see how much of ancient history consists apparently of patches put together from various quarters without any redaction. Is not this largely the case in the Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles? For instance, are not chap. xxiv. and xxvi. of 1 Samuel merely different versions of the same event, just as we have two accounts of the creation in the early chapters of Genesis? And must not chapters xvi. and xvii. of the same book be also from different sources, the account of David in the one being quite inconsistent with that in the other? So, again, in 2 Chron. xi. 20 and xiii. 2, there is a decided difference in the parentage of Abijah's mother, which is curious on any supposition. . . . . I have long thought that the greater part of the Book of Daniel is most certainly a very late work, of the time of the Maccabees; and the pretended prophecy about the Kings of Grecia and Persia, and of the North and South, is mere history, like the poetical prophecies in Virgil and elsewhere. In fact, you can trace distinctly the date when it was written, because the events up to the date are given with historical minuteness, totally unlike the character of real prophecy; and, beyond that date, all is imaginary. — DR. THOS. ARNOLD: *Letters* 20, 111, 222; *in Life and Correspondence*, pp. 69, 255, 358.

In his "Tracts for the Times" (Miscellaneous Works, pp. 285–6), Dr. ARNOLD, after stating his belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures, says that it is an unwarranted interpretation of the term "inspiration" to suppose it equivalent to a communication of the divine perfections; that many of our words and actions are spoken and done by the inspiration of God's Spirit; that all inspiration does not destroy the human and fallible part in the nature which it inspires; and that, though no merely human being ever enjoyed a larger share of the Spirit of God than Paul, yet did he err in expecting, and in leading the Corinthians and Thessalonians to expect, the end of the world in the generation then existing.

We have reason, from the whole tenor of Scripture, to believe that it is not the will of God to effect any end by a miracle which could be as well effected by the established course and methods of his providence. Hence I infer, that the kind or degree of inspiration would be according to the nature of the object; revelation and the highest suggestion, where they were necessary; but, where they were not necessary, that superintendence and direction of divine power upon

the mind, which were sufficient for the purpose. . . . . There are many passages in Scripture to which an original inspiration could not be attached. . . . In Jeremiah, Jonah, and Habakkuk, inspired prophets, we find occasionally the utterance of sinful infirmity; such as, in reference to Hab. i. 2, 3, the late Mr. MILNER calls a "blamable mixture of impatience and unbelief." (*Sermons*, ed. by Dean M. p. 277.) . . . . The three friends of Job, and sometimes Job himself, advance many positions which are not true in principle, nor right in practice, still less inspired. . . . Will any considerate person say that Job's mistaken friends were inspired, when God himself declared to them, "Ye have not spoken concerning me what is right"? or that the holy patriarch himself was inspired, when he execrated the day of his birth? . . . . In relations of fact, veracity and accuracy are all that we want. What possessed these qualities, though the knowledge of it might be derived from any of the common sources of information, would be not less true than that which was infused by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit. — DR. JOHN PYE SMITH: *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. i. pp. 25, 27–9.

In pp. 22–3, this powerful opponent of Unitarianism proposes the following translation of 2 Tim. iii. 16, "Every writing divinely inspired (is) also profitable for instruction," &c., and defends it by the authority of CALVIN, BEZA, DIODATI, J. D. MICHAELIS, DE WETTE, and BOOTHROYD; of the oldest versions, and also of the Geneva English and the Dutch. In pp. 34–8, he assigns his reasons for believing that the Song of Solomon was not a divinely inspired composition, and had no relation to any of the facts or doctrines of either the Israelitish or the Christian economy. In p. 59, he very properly says, that "that which is evinced to be true, whatever may be the channel through which it has entered our minds, we are bound by our relation to the system of God's moral government to believe;" and that "those well-meaning persons who think that they have proved the divine inspiration of a particular sentence (such as 1 Tim. v. 23, or 2 Tim. iv. 13), because their pious fertility has been able to educe a great number of important religious reflections from the advice, the request, the motives, or the implied circumstances, in the case, are committing an egregious folly." In p. 60, he admits that "in the Gospels the same fact or discourse is often related with differences, which, if a rigorous verbal conformity were insisted upon, would be irreconcilable, but which can create no difficulty if only the fair sense and meaning be regarded." And, in p. 62, he confesses, "that, after long and serious examination, this hypothesis of a universal verbal inspiration does appear" to him "to be clogged with innumerable difficulties, and to be by no means required by the facts of the case and the statements of the divine word." In support of his opinion, Dr. SMITH quotes the sentiments advanced by many eminent divines.

Nor again is there any reason to suppose that any of the apostles was in such a sense infallible as that he could not teach false doctrine. They were, indeed, so guided by the Spirit as to have the truth clearly revealed to them, so that they always *knew* it themselves; but it does not appear that they were compelled always to *speak* the truth. *Their* infallibility does not seem to have been like that which Roman Catholics ascribe to their popes, whose decisions they are ready to follow, even when they know them to be personally the worst of men, and perhaps infidels in their hearts. The apostles Peter and Barnabas, for example, were, in one instance, induced by false shame to dissemble the truth which had been revealed to them, and, by the weight of their example, to draw others also into the same fault, Gal. ii. 11–13. Paul, too, expressly tells the Galatians, that, if he himself were to preach any other gospel to them than that which they had already received, they should not listen to him; so that, even in the case of the apostles, men were bound to exercise their own judgments, and not required blindly to receive every thing they said; but, when they spoke as witnesses, to consider the proofs of their integrity; when they reasoned, to examine their reasoning; when they published revelations, to weigh well the miraculous evidence of God's speaking in them. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Cautions for the Times*, pp. 111–12.

The greater part of what the apostles wrote was, doubtless, entirely the suggestion of their own minds, and, properly speaking, uninspired. Its authority is not at all diminished by this circumstance, if we grant (what it would be absurd to doubt) that every wrong suggestion must have been checked by the impulse of the Spirit, every deficiency supplied by actual revelation, and every failure or fault of memory miraculously remedied. The revelation was miraculous; but it was recorded just as any man would record any ordinary information which might be the result of reasoning or of report. The Bible is the only book in the world which appeals to God for its authority, without affecting or pretending to the immediate authorship of God. . . . . The true notion of inspiration is not that the sacred penman was inspired while in the act of writing, but that he wrote what he had beforehand received by extraordinary revelation. · It would be impossible else to account for the variety of style and thought, the occasional introduction of matter foreign to revelation, and whatever else belongs to such writings in common with all mere human compositions. — DR. SAMUEL HINDS, Bishop of Norwich: *History of Christianity*, pp. 190, 284–5.

Having perused with great attention all that has fallen in my way from Protestant writers on this subject [the inspiration of the Scriptures], I have hardly found one single argument advanced by them that is not logically incorrect; so that, if I had not higher grounds on which to rest my belief, they could not have led me to adopt it. . . . It is not fair to consider the Sacred Volume . . . as forming an individual whole. Many of its books stand necessarily on different grounds from the rest. For instance, learned Protestant divines, especially on the continent, have excluded from inspiration the writings of St. Luke and St. Mark, for this reason, that, according to them, the only argument for inspiration in the Scriptures is the promise of divine assistance given to the apostles. But these were not apostles; they were not present at the promise; and, if you extend that privilege beyond those who were present, and to whom the promises were personally addressed, the rule will have no farther limit. If you admit disciples to have partaken of the privilege, on what ground is Barnabas excluded, and why is not his Epistle held canonical? . . . Nowhere does our Saviour tell his apostles, that whatever they may write shall enjoy this privilege [of inspiration]; nor do they anywhere claim it. . . .What internal mark of inspiration can we discover in the third Epistle of St. John to show, that the inspiration sometimes accorded must have been granted here? Is there any thing in that Epistle which a good and virtuous pastor of the primitive ages might not have written; any thing superior in sentiment or doctrine to what an Ignatius or a Polycarp might have indited? It is unfair in the extreme, as I before intimated, to consider the New Testament, and still more the entire Bible, as a whole, and use internal arguments from one book to another; to prove that the Song of Solomon has internal evidence of inspiration, because Jeremiah, who is in the same volume, contains true prophecies; or that the Epistle to Philemon is necessarily inspired, because the Apocalypse, by its side, is a revelation. Yet such is a common way of arguing. If internal evidence has to decide the question, show it me for each book in that sacred collection. . . . As such conversions [those spoken of by the Rev. Mr. Tottingham, an opponent of the Roman Catholic belief] do not prove the preacher's sermon to be inspired, but only the doctrines which he teaches to be good, and, if you please, divine; so neither can a similar fact prove the Bible inspired, but merely its doctrines to be holy and salutary. The "Imitation of Christ" may be thus proved to be an inspired work. . . . His [Mr. Tottingham's] second proof is the prophecies recorded in Scripture. These may,

indeed, prove any book to be inspired which is composed of them, but not, surely, any wherein they are merely recorded. . . . Show me where St. Matthew or St. Mark says that they have written their books under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, or by the command of God, or for any other than human purposes. Unless you can show this, the evidence as to their character may prove that whatever they wrote is true; but it will never prove that it was written under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. Precisely of a similar form is his argument drawn from prophecy. It is never attempted to show how the prophecies *recorded* in the New Testament were intended to prove the inspiration of the books which contain them; how, for instance, the truth of our blessed Redeemer's prophecy touching the destruction of Jerusalem can demonstrate that the Gospel of St. Matthew must be inspired, because it relates it. — CARDINAL WISEMAN: *Lectures on the Doctrines of the Catholic Church*, pp. 31–6.

I . . . shall attempt to wrench this notion of a verbal inspiration from the hands of its champions by a *reductio ad absurdum*, viz., by showing the monstrous consequences to which it leads. . . . Of what use is it to a German, to a Swiss, or to a Scotsman, that, three thousand years before the Reformation, the author of the Pentateuch was kept from erring by a divine restraint over his words, if the authors of this Reformation — Luther, suppose, Zwingle, John Knox — either making translations themselves, or relying upon translations made by others under no such verbal restraint, have been left free to bias his mind, pretty nearly as much as if the original Hebrew writer had been resigned to his own human discretion? . . . The great ideas of the Bible protect themselves. The heavenly truths, by their own imperishableness, defeat the mortality of languages with which for a moment they are associated. Is the lightning enfeebled or dimmed, because for thousands of years it has blended with the tarnish of earth and the steams of earthly graves? Or light, which so long has travelled in the chambers of our sickly air, and searched the haunts of impurity, — is that less pure than it was in the first chapter of Genesis? Or that more holy light of truth, — the truth, suppose, written from his creation upon the tablets of man's heart, — which truth never was imprisoned in any Hebrew or Greek, but has ranged for ever through courts and camps, deserts and cities, the original lesson of justice to man and piety to God, — has that become tainted by intercourse with flesh? or has it become hard to decipher, because the very heart, that human heart where it is inscribed, is so often blotted with

falsehoods? . . . . . In neutral points, having no relation to morals or religious philosophy, it is not concealed by the scriptural records themselves, that even inspired persons made grave mistakes. All the apostles, it is probable, or with the single exception of St. John, shared in the mistake about the second coming of Christ, as an event immediately to be looked for. With respect to diseases, again, it is evident that the apostles, in common with all Jews, were habitually disposed to read in them distinct manifestations of heavenly wrath. — THOMAS DE QUINCEY: *Theological Essays*, vol. i. pp. 77–8, 80–1, 87, and 175.

In pp. 94–6, Mr. DE QUINCEY shows that a divine teacher or a sacred writer could not avoid the use of phraseology involving scientific errors, without frustrating the objects of his mission, which was to teach, not science, but religion; and says that this "line of argument applies to all the compliances of Christ with the Jewish prejudices (partly imported from the Euphrates) as to demonology, witchcraft, &c."

One thing is clear from this, and many other like passages, viz., that the apostles were not uniformly and always guided in all their thoughts, desires, and purposes, by an infallible Spirit of inspiration. Had this been the case, how could Paul have often purposed that which never came to pass? Those who plead for such a uniform persuasion may seem to be zealous for the honor of the apostles and founders of Christianity; but they do in fact cherish a mistaken zeal. For if we once admit that the apostles were uniformly inspired in all which they purposed, said, or did; then we are constrained, of course, to admit that men acting under the influence of inspiration may purpose that which will never come to pass or be done; may say that which is hasty or incorrect, Acts xxiii. 3, or do that which the gospel disapproves, Gal. ii. 13, 14. But if this be once fully admitted, then it would make nothing for the credit due to any man to affirm that he is inspired; for what is that inspiration to be accounted of, which, even during its continuance, does not guard the subject of it from mistake or error? Consequently, those who maintain the uniform inspiration of the apostles, and yet admit (as they are compelled to do) their errors in purpose, word, and action, do in effect obscure the glory of inspiration, by reducing inspired and uninspired men to the same level. To my own mind, nothing appears more certain than that inspiration, in any respect whatever, was not abiding and uniform with the apostles or any of the primitive Christians. To God's only and well-beloved Son, and to him only, was it given to have the Spirit ἀμετρῶς or οὐ ἐκ

μέτρου ["not by measure"], John iii. 34. . . . The consequence of this was, that Jesus "knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;" but all his followers, whenever they were left without the special and miraculous guidance of the Spirit, committed more or less of sin and error. This view of the subject frees it from many and most formidable difficulties. It assigns to the Saviour the pre-eminence which is justly due. It accounts for the mistakes and errors of his apostles. At the same time, it does not detract, in the least degree, from the certainty and validity of the sayings and doings of the apostles, when they were under the special influence of the Spirit of God. — MOSES STUART on Rom. i. 13; *in Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, pp. 55–6.

We cannot admit the force of the reasoning [of M. Gaussen, of the Oratoire] that would exalt all the writings of the Old and New Testament to prophetic dignity; . . . and still less can we sympathize with the rigid uniformity with which he carries out, in little harmony as it seems to us with his own views of individuality, the theory of *ab initio* dictation in the case of every sacred writer without exception. — *North British Review for November*, 1852; Amer. edition, vol. xiii. pp. 99, 100.

The author of the article from which we make this extract opposes both that view of inspiration which would resolve it, with the naturalistic school, into elevated genius; and the older opinion of some supernaturalists, which would make all the writers of the Bible, not only in their ideas but in their style, mere amanuenses of the Holy Spirit. Contrary also to SCHLEIERMACHER, COLERIDGE, NEANDER, and THOLUCK, who, in common with a great majority of Unitarians, believe in a partial inspiration of the Sacred Writings, he regards all these as being plenarily inspired or infallible, though he candidly admits (p. 97) that "a discordant aspect" has been given "to some parts of the Scripture" from "the neglect of chronological details, and many other circumstances;" "leaving the believer in plenary inspiration in doubt and perplexity."

The difficulties [which the Bible offers] never will be all resolved; and, even if they were so, they would but give place to fresh ones. . . . . When we look closely into this matter, we shall find . . . that the personal feeling of the writers [of the Old and New Testament canons] is the same; that their individuality has the same scope, and produces the same effects; that the influence of circumstances on their writings is the same; and that all — various readings, incorrect translations, the use of various sources of information, documentary and otherwise, varieties of style, faults in grammar, trifling details, confessions of

weakness, ignorance, and sin, apparent contradictions and errors, loss of the authors' names, absence of any formal sanction to the canon, — all, in short, which we meet with in the case of the one canon is to be found also in that of the other. . . . . With the exception of those cases in which they transmit to us some matter of direct revelation, . . . the prophets and apostles alike write under the impulse of their own peculiar feelings. The prophets who wrote the history of the kings of Judah and Israel had no more thought of producing oracles of God than had Mark or Luke in writing the history of Jesus Christ. — COUNT AGÉNOR GASPARIN: *The Schools of Doubt and the School of Faith*, pp. 212, 287–8, 297.

Let not the reader, if unacquainted with the aim of Count GASPARIN, suppose, from the extracts we have made from him, that he founds his belief in revelation on the trustworthiness of the writers of the Bible, or on the divinity of the principles which they inculcate or record. The object of his work, on the contrary, is to establish the dogma of the plenary inspiration of all parts of Scripture; the absolute infallibility of all the books admitted into the Protestant canon; the perfect equality of a canonical book of Moses, of David, of Solomon, or of an apostle, to the words even of Jesus Christ himself (pp. 194, 198). But if there be in the Bible so much of difficulty, error, weakness, apparent contradiction, &c., as he represents, — whatever may be the causes from which this originates, — we may be permitted to ask what conceivable value to faith is attributed in the theory of inspiration and infallibility for which he so eloquently contends.

§ 2. THE DENIAL OF VERBAL OR OF PLENARY INSPIRATION NOT A DENIAL OF REVELATION.

It is not of necessity to salvation to believe every book or verse in Scripture to be canonical, or written by the Spirit of God. For as the Papists' canon is larger than that which the Protestants own; so, if our canon should prove defective of any one book, it would not follow that we could not be saved for want of a sufficient faith. The churches immediately after the apostles' time had not each one all their writings; but they were brought together in time, and received by degrees, as they had proof of their being written by authorized, inspired persons. . . . A man may be saved who believeth not some books of Scripture (as Jude, 2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John, Revelations) to be canonical, or the word of God; so he heartily believe the rest, or the essentials. . . . . Though all Scripture be of divine authority, yet he that believeth but some one book which containeth the substance of the doctrine of salvation may be saved; much more they that have

doubted but of some particular books. They that take the Scripture to be but the writings of godly, honest men, and so to be only a means of making known Christ, having a gradual precedency to the writings of other godly men, and do believe in Christ upon those strong grounds which are drawn from his doctrine, miracles, &c., rather than upon the testimony of the writing, as being purely infallible and divine, may yet have a divine and saving faith. Much more those that believe the whole writing to be of divine inspiration where it handleth the substance, but doubt whether God infallibly guide them in every circumstance. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Christian Directory*, and *The Saint's Rest*; *in Practical Works*, vol. v. pp. 523, 561; and vol. xxii. p. 264.

Since the Jews had, at the time of the writing of the New Testament, a peculiar way of expounding many prophecies and passages in the Old Testament, it was a very proper way to convince them, to allege many places according to their key and methods of exposition. Therefore, when divine writers argue upon any point, we are always bound to believe the conclusions that their reasonings end in, as parts of divine revelation; but we are not bound to be able to make out, or even to assent to, all the premises made use of by them in their whole extent, unless it appears plainly that they affirm the premises as expressly as they do the conclusions proved by them. — BISHOP BURNET: *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, Art. 6, pp. 112–13.

If the four evangelists were not rendered infallible by the immediate intervention of the Deity, it is hardly possible that their accounts should be wholly free from error, and therefore in no case contradictory to each other. But even if it be true that their accounts are sometimes at variance, it by no means follows, that the history itself, the miracles and the resurrection of Christ, are a forgery; and the only inference which we can deduce from it, is that the evangelists were not inspired, at least not in the relation of historical facts. . . . To speak the truth, I do not believe that the evangelists were divinely inspired in matters of history. — J. D. MICHAELIS: *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. iii. part i. pp. 26–7.

He who acquires knowledge, not by the use of any natural faculty, neither by immediate perception, nor by reasoning, nor by instruction, but in some inexplicable, miraculous manner, is inspired. He who sets down in writing the knowledge so obtained composes an inspired work. There appears to be no intelligible distinction between original revelation and inspiration; and yet men seem to have entertained

an obscure notion of something more: otherwise they could not have been perplexed with so many difficulties concerning the accuracy and perfection of the Scriptures. They contain some few passages which appear to have no relation to religion, and many facts which the writers certainly knew in the ordinary way. Nor does there seem any reason to expect marks of the interposition of Heaven in such matters. The great truths impressed on their minds neither obliterated their former knowledge, nor made it perfect. When they speak, for instance, of a Roman custom or a Jewish tradition, we are not to imagine that these things were revealed from above, nor to require greater accuracy in their accounts of them than in other writers who treat of the affairs of their own age and their own country. When they relate the wonderful events which they had seen and heard, it will be no objection to their credit as human witnesses, that we find in their several histories of the same fact such a variety of circumstances or of method as always occurs in other the most exact narrations. Difficulties of this kind could never have arisen, or must have been easily removed, had either the impugners or defenders of the Sacred Writings formed precise ideas of the nature of inspiration, and attended to its use. This was not to teach men history or philosophy; not to instruct them in the arts of composition, or the ornaments of human learning; but to make them understand and believe the religion of Jesus. — DR. WILLIAM SAMUEL POWELL: *Discourses*, No. II. pp. 41–2.

The views of inspiration so clearly presented by Dr. POWELL seem in the main to be those generally adopted by Unitarians. In his fifteenth Discourse, he enters more at large on the subject, particularly in its bearing on the Epistles of Paul; — shows that the great apostle had received the doctrines of Christianity from Christ himself, but that his natural faculties and his education enabled him to retain the knowledge he had acquired, and to impart it to others in a style forcible, but "abounding with broken sentences, bold figures, and hard, far-fetched metaphors;" — observes, that, though it were possible to prove the Scriptures to have been dictated verbally by the Holy Spirit, "it does not appear that any important conclusions would be deducible from it;" and closes the discussion with a remark, the justness of which will, we think, be admitted by all true Protestants, — that "that which" in the Scriptures "is important is also clear;" and "that, whatever may be thought of the coloring, the substance of these writings was from heaven."

If we once admit the fallibility of the apostolic judgment, where are we to stop, or in what can we rely upon it? To which question, . . . as arguing for the substantial truth of the Christian history, and

for that alone, it is competent to the advocate of Christianity to reply, "Give me the apostles' testimony, and I do not stand in need of their judgment; give me the facts, and I have complete security for every conclusion I want." . . . The two following cautions . . . will exclude all uncertainty upon this head which can be attended with danger: First, To separate what was the object of the apostolic mission, and declared by them to be so, from what was extraneous to it, or only incidentally connected with it. . . . Secondly, That, in reading the apostolic writings, we distinguish between their doctrines and their arguments. Their doctrines came to them by revelation properly so called; yet, in propounding these doctrines in their writings or discourses, they were wont to illustrate, support, and enforce them by such analogies, arguments, and considerations, as their own thoughts suggested. . . . The doctrine itself must be received; but it is not necessary, in order to defend Christianity, to defend the propriety of every comparison, or the validity of every argument, which the apostle has brought into the discussion. — DR. WM. PALEY: *Evidences of Christianity*, part iii. chap. 2; *in Works*, pp. 412–13.

We have omitted the illustrations by which this clear-headed thinker supports his reasoning, drawn from the belief of the evangelists in the reality of demoniacal possession, and from the erroneous opinion attributed to the apostles, and supposed to be found in their writings, that the day of judgment was to approach in their own times. But, as PALEY'S work is well known, the whole chapter can easily be referred to.

The history of the New Testament remains in the main true, although the narrator may deviate from what actually took place, in describing immaterial collateral circumstances, or may, through mistake, alter or add something in such collateral incidents; and although he may adopt words somewhat varying from those actually used by the characters occurring in the history. It is sufficient if only the facts themselves are not fabricated, the thoughts and sentiments of the actors and speakers not perverted, and the truths which they propound not mixed with falsehood. In this sense we maintain that the history contained in the New Testament is true. The material facts are not affected. . . . . The truth of an event in general depends not upon single words, nor on trivial temporary limitations and collateral incidents; but the question is, whether the fact be true. Each narrator has recorded it somewhat differently according to his own observation, and the different way by which he arrived at the knowledge of it. This very variety confirms the truth of the evangelic

history. A suspicion would naturally arise against them, if each of the evangelists had narrated every thing to the minutest circumstance in the very same words. — G. F. SEILER: *Biblical Hermeneutics*, §§ 298, 326.

It is my profound conviction that St. John and St. Paul were divinely inspired; but I totally disbelieve the dictation of any one word, sentence, or argument, throughout their writings. Observe, there was revelation. . . . Revelations of facts were undoubtedly made to the prophets; revelations of doctrines were as undoubtedly made to John and Paul; — but is it not a mere matter of our very senses that John and Paul each dealt with those revelations, expounded them, insisted on them, just exactly according to his own natural strength of intellect, habit of reasoning, moral and even physical temperament? We receive the books ascribed to John and Paul as their books on the judgment of men for whom no miraculous judgment is pretended; nay, whom, in their admission and rejection of other books, we believe to have erred. Shall we give less credence to John and Paul themselves? Surely the heart and soul of every Christian give him sufficient assurance, that, in all things that concern him as a man, the words that he reads are spirit and truth, and could only proceed from Him who made both heart and soul. Understand the matter so, and all difficulty vanishes: you read without fear, lest your faith meet with some shock from a passage here and there which you cannot reconcile with immediate dictation by the Holy Spirit of God, without an absurd violence offered to the text. You read the Bible as the best of all books, but still as a book, and make use of all the means and appliances which learning and skill, under the blessing of God, can afford towards rightly apprehending the general sense of it; not solicitous to find out doctrine in mere epistolary familiarity, or facts in clear *ad hominem et pro tempore* allusions to national traditions. — S. T. COLERIDGE: *Table Talk; in Works*, vol. vi. pp. 386–7.

The same laws of criticism which teach us to distinguish between various degrees of testimony, authorize us to assign the very highest rank to the evidences of the writings of St. John and St. Paul. If belief is to be given to any human compositions, it is due to these; yet, if we believe these merely as human compositions, and without assuming any thing as to their divine inspiration, our Christian faith, as it seems to me, is reasonable; not merely the facts of our Lord's miracles and resurrection, but Christian faith in all its fulness, the whole dispensation of the Spirit, the revelation of the redemption of man and

of the Divine Persons who are its authors, of all that Christian faith and hope and love can need. And this is so true, that even without reckoning the Epistle to the Hebrews amongst St. Paul's writings; nay, even if we choose to reject the three pastoral Epistles; yet, taking only what neither has been nor can be doubted, — the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, — we have in these, together with St. John's Gospel and First Epistle, — giving up, if we choose, the other two, — a ground on which our faith may stand for ever, according to the strictest rules of the understanding, according to the clearest intuitions of reason. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Miscellaneous Works*, pp. 280–1.

It may be fairly questioned, first, whether even its sacred history is inspired. For although, wherever a point of faith or practice is involved in the historical record, inspiration must be supposed (else the application of the record as an infallible rule must be abandoned), yet, where this is not the case, there seems to be no necessity for supposing inspiration; and, by not supposing it, several difficulties in the attempt to harmonize the sacred historians are removed. Again, proceeding still on the principle that the truths to be believed, the material of faith, is the point to which the control or suggestions of inspiration must have been directed, and to which alone it is necessary for constituting the Bible the rule of faith, that it should be directed, — the *reasoning* of the inspired writers may be considered safely as their own. I do not mean to impugn the reasoning of any one passage in the apostolical writings; but, were any found open to it, the circumstance would not, according to this view, affect the inspired character and authority of the work. — BISHOP HINDS: *History of Christianity*, pp. 523–4; Appendix, Note I.

It seems to me far safer, more scriptural, more godly, to suppose they [the writers of the Bible] did *take pains*, and that the Spirit taught them to take pains, in sifting facts, than to suppose that they were merely told the facts. I most assuredly could not give up the faith in God which they have cherished in me, if I found they had made mistakes; and I have too much respect and honor for those who use the strongest expressions about the certainty of every word in the Scriptures, to suppose that *they* would. . . . If any one likes to speak of *plenary* inspiration, I would not complain: I object to the inspiration which people talk of, for being too empty, — not for being too full. These forms of speech . . . are not for those who are struggling with life and death: such persons want, not a plenary inspiration or a

verbal inspiration, but a book of life; and they will know that they have such a book when you have courage to tell them that there is a Spirit with them who will guide them into the truth of it. — F. D. MAURICE: *Theological Essays*, pp. 260–1.

To say [as is said by Count Gasparin] that authority must cease with the slightest admixture of error, is surely opposed to common sense and all experience. . . . We might as well say, that testimony ceases to be testimony, as that authority ceases to be authority, as soon as there is the least admixture of what is doubtful or untrue. Applied to the case before us, the inaccuracy of the assertion is equally plain. Were the Scriptures no authority to those early Christians who doubted the canonicity of the Epistles of St. James and Jude; or to LUTHER, when he spoke of tossing the Book of Esther into the Elbe; or to PYE SMITH, when he disowned the Song of Solomon? Is a man's Christian faith at an end, and his submission to the word of God destroyed, the moment he rejects the last verses of St. Mark, or stands in doubt whether to receive or reject the verse of the three heavenly witnesses? Such rash statements are equally rash and mischievous. They bind heavy burdens upon the weak faith of infants in the family of Christ, which crush them into blind credulity, if passively accepted; or repel them into dangerous incredulity, if hastily flung away. There are several books and many verses of the Bible, in which it has not pleased God that the evidence of canonicity should be as clear as that which attests the main facts and fundamental doctrines of the gospel. A faith in the plenary inspiration of such portions can never rank among the vitals of Christianity. Men ought to ask themselves whether they are not tampering with their conscience or their reason, before they can look on it in this light, and persuade themselves into a conclusion which is obviously ill-founded and mischievous. . . . . If a perfect code, exempt from the slightest measure of error, or the least haze upon the horizon, were essential to the nature of a divine revelation, we should be compelled to contradict the plainest facts, and assert the infallibility of every version of the Bible, and every copy of every version. Those who read it in this form are millions to one, compared with those who could have access to the original autographs. In the case of the whole Bible, it is certain that no one person can ever have enjoyed this privilege. The degree of error, then, which is disclosed by various readings and imperfect versions, is plainly quite consistent with the great practical object of a message from God to man. There can thus be no *à priori* reason why the same degree of error in the

autographs themselves might not be consistent with the purpose and character of a divine message..... The maxim [that the infallibility or inspiration of the Scriptures admits of no degrees, as asserted by Count Gasparin] does equal violence to the instincts of every Christian, confirmed by the daily experience of the church of God. The New Testament is felt to be more precious than the Old; the Psalms and Isaiah, than the Minor Prophets, or the appendices of the sacred history. What Christian, unless under some strange bias, can read Ezra ii. 45–54 and John iii. 16 in succession, and seriously affirm that they are of equal dignity and spiritual excellence? . . . Truths equally true are not all of equal importance, and may differ widely, both in the ulness of spiritual wisdom from which they emanate, and their tendency to maintain the spiritual life of the church of God. — *Christian Observer for March*, 1855; pp. 180–1, 183, 189–90.

§ 8. The Dogma of the Infallibility of all Parts of the Bible Injurious to the Interests of Christianity.

All these err in overdoing [that is, all err who assert that Scripture excludes as useless the whole law and light of nature; that it is so divine, not only in matter, but in method and style, as to exhibit no human imperfection or weakness; that every passage in the Bible is equally obligatory on men of all places and ages; that the whole of it forms so perfect a rule of faith, that nothing which comes in any other way is to be taken for certain; that, in order to be saved, we must hold the canonicalness of every book and text of Scripture; and that there are no various readings or doubtful texts, no corruption in written or printed copies]. . . . The dangers of overdoing here are these: 1. It leadeth to downright infidelity; for, when men find that the Scripture is imperfect or wanting in that which they fancy to be part of its perfection, and to be really insufficient, . . . they will be apt to say, "It is not of God, because it hath not that which it pretends to have." 2. God is made the author of defects and imperfections. 3. The Scripture is exposed to the scorn and confutation of infidels. — Richard Baxter: *Christian Directory; in Practical Works*, vol. i. pp. 562–5.

The most dangerous objections which can be made to the truth of our religion, and such as are most difficult to answer, are those drawn from the different relations of the four evangelists. The "Fragments"

published by Lessing insist chiefly on this objection; but the whole vanishes into nothing, unless we ourselves give it that importance which it has not in itself, by assuming an unnecessary hypothesis. — J. D. MICHAELIS: *Introd. to New Testament*, vol. i. pp. 75–6.

No intelligent Christian will distinguish it by that name [will distinguish the Bible by calling it the "word of God"], without a large restriction of its contents. All we assert respecting it is, that it is a collection of writings, containing a history of the divine dispensations to our world, and that the proper word of God, with numberless other particulars, is interwoven all the way through these most ancient and invaluable writings. — DAVID SIMPSON: *Plea for Religion*, p. 222.

Had the distinction which Mr. SIMPSON, in common with the generality of Unitarians, makes between the word of God and the books containing it, been attended to by Christian divines in general, instead of their confounding terms of a widely different meaning, many of the objections urged by unbelievers would have lost their force; and neither the curses of a Hebrew bard, the mistakes of an evangelist, nor the inconsequential reasonings of an apostle, would have been regarded as at all affecting the credibility of a revelation from God.

They who read it [the Sacred Volume] with "an evil heart of unbelief" and an alien spirit, — what boots for them the assertion that every sentence was miraculously communicated to the nominal author by God himself? Will it not rather present additional temptations to the unhappy scoffers, and furnish them with a pretext of self-justification? . . . . . I am told that this doctrine must not be resisted or called in question, because of its fitness to preserve unity of faith, and for the prevention of schism and sectarian byways! Let the man who holds this language trace the history of Protestantism, and the growth of sectarian divisions, ending with Dr. Hawker's ultra-Calvinistic Tracts, and Mr. Belsham's New Version of the Testament. And then let him tell me, that, for the prevention of an evil which already exists, and which the boasted preventive itself might rather seem to have occasioned, I must submit to be silenced by the first learned infidel who throws in my face the blessings of Deborah, or the cursings of David, or the Grecisms and heavier difficulties in the biographical chapters of the Book of Daniel, or the hydrography and natural philosophy of the patriarchal ages, — I must forego the means of silencing, and the prospect of convincing, an alienated brother, because I must not thus answer: "My brother, what has all this to do with the truth and the worth of Christianity? . . . If, though but with the faith of a

Seneca or an Antonine, you admit the co-operation of a divine Spirit in souls desirous of good, even as the breath of heaven works variously in each several plant according to its kind, character, period of growth, and circumstance of soil, clime, and aspect, — on what ground can you assume that its presence is incompatible with all imperfection in the subject, even with such imperfection as is the natural accompaniment of the unripe season? . . . I demand for the Bible only the justice which you grant to other books of grave authority, and to other proved and acknowledged benefactors of mankind. Will you deny a spirit of wisdom in Lord Bacon, because in particular facts he did not possess perfect science, or an entire immunity from the positive errors which result from imperfect insight? . . . Thenceforward your doubts will be confined to such parts or passages of the received canon as seem to you irreconcilable with known truths, and at variance with the tests given in the Scriptures themselves, and as shall continue so to appear after you have examined each in reference to the circumstances of the writer or speaker, the dispensation under which he lived, the purpose of the particular passage, and the intent and object of the Scriptures at large." — S. T. COLERIDGE: *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit; in Works*, vol. v. pp. 599, 602–3, 606.

For COLERIDGE'S utterances of deep and fervid admiration of the Holy Scriptures, to which all Christians will respond, recourse should be had to the work itself.

Those who affirm, in a general and indiscriminate manner, that all and every the parts of the Old Testament were immediately dictated by the Holy Spirit, and that to each the same kind of inspiration belongs, appear to me to go farther than the evidence warrants, and to lay the cause of revealed religion under the feet of its enemies. . . . . These facts [erroneous statements of numbers in the Old Testament] must fearfully affect the theory of a servile literality of inspiration. It is that theory which has put the most ostensibly powerful arms into the hands of the foes to God and man. The efforts which are at this moment made, amongst the metaphysical and religious distractions of Germany, by Wislicenus, Uhlich, and other real or pretended Hegelians, find a chief standing-point in their assuming that the Christian faith requires a literal understanding of the phraseology in the Bible which speaks of divine acts and of natural objects in the manner that was adapted to the temporary and local state of human knowledge. — DR. JOHN PYE SMITH: *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. i. pp. 27, 30.

These principles of interpretation [this, in particular, that "Scripture is its own interpreter"] were forgotten, this pre-eminence of scriptural above human system strangely reversed, by the successors of the Reformers [in Germany]. . . . False ideas of inspiration, introduced by the imaginary necessities of the argument with the Romanists, contributed to the same result: from the first assumption, that the whole of Scripture was immediately dictated by the Holy Spirit, was derived a second, that all must be of actual value. To prove this, it was supposed that the same doctrines, the same fundamental truths of Christianity, must be not implied merely, but expressed, by all; a theory which must, of necessity, do much violence to the sacred text, while it overlooked the beautiful arrangement, according to which the different doctrines of revelation are each prominently conveyed by that mind which was most adapted to its reception. . . . Yet greater confusion must obviously be the result of the same theory, when applied to the Old Testament. The difference of the law and the gospel, which Luther had so vividly seen, was obliterated, the shadow identified with the substance, the preparatory system with the perfect disclosure. Not content with finding the germs of Christian doctrine in the Old Testament, or those dawning rays which were to prepare the mental eye for the gradual reception of fuller light, but whose entire character could only be understood by those who should witness the rising of that luminary whose approach they announced; they not only considered prophecy as being throughout an inverted history, but held that all the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity were even to the Jews as much revealed in the Old Testament as in the New, and that the knowledge of these doctrines was as necessary to their salvation as to ours. No scientific error seems to have prepared so much for the subsequent re-action, in which all prophecy was discarded, all doctrine considered to be precarious. . . . The Scriptures, thus handled, instead of a living word, could not but become a dead repository of barren technicalities. Less important, lastly, though perhaps in its effects more immediately dangerous, was the corollary to the same theory of inspiration, that even historical passages, in which no religious truth was contained, were equally inspired with the rest, and consequently that no error, however minute, could even here be admitted. Yet, the imparting of religious truth being the object of revelation, any further extension of inspiration would appear an unnecessary miracle, as indeed it is one nowhere claimed by the writers of the New Testament. . . . . The faith of the Christian depends not

upon the reception of one or the other book of Scripture; and it has been a supposition pregnant with mischief, that any doubt respecting an individual portion of the Sacred Volume necessarily implies a diminished value for its whole contents, or a weakened reverence and gratitude towards its divine Giver. — E. B. PUSEY: *Causes of the Rationalist Character predominant in the Theology of Germany*, pp. 28–32, 154; Lond. 1828.

"It is remarkable," says a critic in the North British Review for February, 1854, "that the first elaborate defence of German divines proceeded from the pen of Dr. PUSEY, who, though he has retracted his book, has not refuted his arguments."

While Christians of all denominations have ever agreed in admitting the inspiration of the New Testament, on no one point perhaps has there been a greater diversity of opinion than on the character of this inspiration. On this diversity of view, one general remark may be hazarded; and it will be found, I think, warranted by historical fact. In proportion as inspiration has been made to approach to a complete inditing of the Scriptures, the Scriptures have been neglected. The consequence of the study and application of the Bible, from the period of the Reformation, has been, gradually and progressively, to limit the extent of inspiration; and, by so doing, to vindicate the holy character of what is unquestionably of divine origin, and to make the application of the rule of faith more sure. It was only perhaps in the worst ages of superstition, that an entire inspiration of matter, words, and composition generally, like that asserted of the Koran, was universally contended for. — BISHOP HINDS: *History of Christianity*, pp. 520–1; Appendix, Note I.

It is great folly to turn our faith in Christianity into a Rupert's drop, which must fly into shivers the moment the Book of Obadiah or of Esther, or the second and third Epistles of St. John, or even a few disputed verses, are broken from the canon by an error of judgment. Such confused, ill-judging defences of the truth must naturally breed scepticism by wholesale, whenever they do not fall on the rich soil of a Protestant Popery, which receives any reasoning with implicit faith that leads to a foregone conclusion. . . . . Infallibility, or perfect freedom from all error, must perish with one faulty reading or erroneous version: consequently, the logical result of the whole process, which the author [Count Gasparin] commends as the only entrance to the School of Faith, is to leave our faith without any foundation whatever. It becomes an inverted pyramid, resting on its point; and

this point itself is lost and buried in the sands of a hundred versions and ten thousand various readings. — *Christian Observer for March*, 1855; pp. 188, 192.

It will be seen, that, amid some diversity of opinion as to the precise nature of the inspiration possessed by the writers of the Bible, none of the authors from whom we have quoted, with the equivocal exception of GASPARIN, would defend the old opinion, still believed by ignorant multitudes, that every word contained in the Bible was dictated by the Spirit of God; that no mistake or error exists in the Sacred Records, whether relating to science or to history, to sentiment or to reasoning, to philosophy or to religion; that the books embraced in the present canons of the Old and New Testament, neither more nor less, and each and all parts, whether patriarchal, Jewish, or Christian, — whether historical, poetical, prophetic, or doctrinal, — whether obscure or plain, mysterious or intelligible, — are equally divine, and equally binding on the consciences and hearts of the disciples of Jesus.

It would be egregious trifling seriously to refute such a mass of absurdities; and even the professed defenders of plenary inspiration are forced to make so many exceptions and restrictions to their theory as to render it practically useless, and to involve, after all, the principle of an inspiration which is only partial, and of an infallibility which is not absolutely perfect. We think it obvious that the Bible contains numerous passages, and even some entire books, which can in no proper sense be termed divine revelation; that neither the Book of Esther nor the Song of Solomon possesses any religious character whatever; that the historical portions of the Old and New Testament, though containing in the main a true record of things divine and supernatural as well as human, are not in themselves a revelation from heaven, any more than are the historical works of Gibbon, Hume, and Robertson; that the reasonings and inferences of the sacred writers, the modes in which they expressed their thoughts, and the images which they used to illustrate their doctrines, are as much human as those of classical and profane authors, who have given to the world the products of their learning or their genius. We are far from meaning to put the Gospels and the Acts, as to the value of their contents, on an equality with the histories of the Roman empire, or of the kingdoms of England and Scotland; nor would we at all imply, that, in our opinion, the Books of Moses and the Prophets, or the Epistles of Paul, Peter, and John, are not of more intrinsic worth than the best productions of any philosophic or historical school. They are no doubt immeasurably superior, not in the pomp of their expressions or in the harmony of their periods, — though many portions will, as to beauty or sublimity of style, bear a comparison with the finest compositions of ancient or modern times, — but in the grandeur of the subjects treated of, and in the fact, that, though not free from some of the errors of the times in which they were written, they contain those revelations of the Infinite

Mind which speak to the human heart and conscience, with a clearer, a more penetrating and authoritative voice, than unassisted reason ever did, of the character and designs of God; of the capacities, duties, responsibilities, and destiny of man.

To prove the correctness of these opinions accords not with the purposes we have in view. We have expressed them, because they seem to us well founded, and harmonize either with the sentiments we have quoted from Trinitarian writers, or with principles involved in the acknowledgment by others of a partial inspiration, a disputable canon, a corrupt text, contradictory versions, and fallible interpretations. And we have dwelt more at length on this subject, not only because it is interesting in itself, and forms an essential feature in the discussions of the present day as to the conflicting claims of naturalism and supernaturalism, but also because one of the strongest obstacles to inquiry into the truth of Unitarian principles has had its origin in the outcry sometimes raised by orthodox divines against Unitarians for denying the plenary inspiration of the sacred penmen, and rejecting from the canon certain verses, chapters, and books; as if this denial and rejection went to prove their contempt of revelation itself, and their secret conviction that the doctrines which they uphold are discountenanced in the Holy Scriptures. But it is shown that this inference is altogether groundless; for opinions of the same or of a similar kind have been entertained by not a few of the best men and most acute thinkers belonging to the Trinitarian body. Believing, with Unitarians, that, with very few exceptions, the books of which the Bible is made up are the holiest and the most instructive that have ever been written, and that they are invaluable from their containing the records of God's revelations to his human family, they have felt unable to close their eyes to the fact, that there are in them many errors and discrepancies, which, though not affecting the substantial truth of the narratives, doctrines, and principles they contain, preclude altogether the conception of infallibility on the part of the writers, or of pure and absolute truth in every part of their compositions.

It cannot be denied that Unitarians have disputed the genuineness of certain books and texts in the Bible which are supposed to have a bearing on the Trinitarian controversy; but so have also many learned men in the ranks of the orthodox; and the proper question to be asked is, not "What are the *motives* by which you are actuated in questioning these books and texts?" but "What are your *reasons* for deciding in favor of their spuriousness or their corruption?" To say nothing of the impropriety of confounding inspiration with genuineness, it may be remarked, that the charge of dealing falsely with the word of God comes with a bad grace from persons who are confessedly unable to cite a single passage of Scripture in which the doctrine of a Triune God is expressly mentioned, against those who can adduce passages unequivocally and plainly declarative of their great doctrine that God is one, and that the Father is the only true God. — But we are anticipating another portion of our work, and forbear dwelling on this point.

SECT. VI. — THE IMPROPER TREATMENT OF SCRIPTURE.

We pick out a text here and there to make it serve our turn; whereas, if we take it altogether, and considered what went before, and what followed after, we should find it meant no such thing. — JOHN SELDEN.

In every age, man has imported his own crazes into the Bible, fancied that he saw them there, and then drawn sanctions to his wickedness or absurdity from what were nothing else than fictions of his own. — THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

What monstrous absurdities will not fanatics be able to elicit from the Scripture, if they are permitted to allege every detached and ill-understood word and syllable in confirmation of their notions? — JOHN CALVIN: *Institutes*, book iv. chap. xvii. 23.

It is no wonder if they can accommodate Scripture expressions to their own dreams and fancies; for, when men's fancies are so possessed with schemes and ideas of religion, whatever they look on appears of the same shape and color wherewith their minds are already tinctured. . . . All the metaphors and similitudes and allegories of Scripture are easily applied to their purpose; and, if any word sound like the tinkling of their own fancies, it is no less than a demonstration that that is the meaning of the Spirit of God; and every little shadow and appearance doth mightily confirm them in their preconceived opinions. — DR. WILLIAM SHERLOCK: *Knowledge of Christ*, chap. iii. sect. 4.

The first and great mark of one who corrupts the word of God, is introducing into it human mixtures; either the errors of others, or the fancies of his own brain. . . . Scarce ever was any erroneous opinion either invented or received, but Scripture was quoted to defend it; and, when the imposture was too barefaced, and the texts cited for it appeared too plainly either to make against it, or to be nothing to the purpose, then recourse has usually been had to a second method of corrupting it, — by mixing it with false interpretations. And this is done, sometimes by repeating the words wrong, and sometimes by repeating them right, but putting a wrong sense upon them; one that is either strained and unnatural, or foreign to the writer's intention in the place from whence they are taken; perhaps contrary either to his intention in that place, or to what he says in some other part of his writings. And this is easily effected: any passage is easily perverted, by being recited singly, without any of the preceding or following verses. — JOHN WESLEY: *Sermon* 133; *in Works*, vol. ii. p. 504.

There is no more common error in many departments of study and especially in theology, than the prevalence of a love of system over the love of truth. Men are often so much captivated by the aspect of what seems to them a regular, beautiful, and well-connected theory, as to adopt it hastily, without inquiring, in the outset, how far it is conformable to facts or to scriptural authority; and thus, often on one or two passages of Scripture, have built up an ingenious and consistent scheme, of which the far greater part is a tissue of their own reasonings and conjectures. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Essays on Difficulties in Paul's Writings*, pp. 243–4.

Too many nominal Christians entertain only the most miserable idea of the nature of the gospel they profess to believe. Their only notion too often consists in a confused general impression of a certain sacredness in Scripture, which produces little effect beyond that of making them afraid to enter its precincts, and search its recesses for themselves, and yet more fearful lest its sanctity should be invaded by others. And their dread of openly encountering any contradictions, and their anxious desire to shelter themselves under even the most frivolous explanations, if it does not betray a lurking distrust of the proper evidences of their faith, at least evinces the lowest and most unworthy conceptions of the spirit and meaning of the Bible, and an almost total absence of due distinction between the design and application of the several portions of which it is made up. That such misconception should prevail is indeed a lamentable, but not a surprising, instance of the liability of human nature to misapply the best gifts, whether of providence or grace. And its influence has been unhappily cherished and confirmed by the prevalence of those theological systems which have dictated the practice of literalizing upon all the expressions of the sacred writers; so that the magnificent imagery of the finest passages of inspiration is reduced to the lowest standard of verbal dogmatism; and minds incapable of appreciating the divine sublimity of those descriptions think to add to the evidence of their truth by a forced and unnatural perversion of their meaning. With others, again, the sincere, but (as we must consider it) misguided, spirit of religious fanaticism produces similar effects. Blinded to all but the internal light of his spiritual impressions, the enthusiast will always entertain a deeply-rooted and devoted hostility against any such distinctions as those here advocated. Maintaining the literal application of every sentence, every syllable, of the divine word, he rejects as impious the slightest departure from it. Human reason,

along with all science which is its offspring, is at best carnal and unsanctified; and, should any of its conclusions be advanced in contradiction to the letter of a scriptural text, this completely seals its condemnation as absolutely sinful, and equivalent to a rejection of revelation altogether. — BADEN POWELL: *Connection of Natural and Divine Truth*, pp. 242–3.

A want of due investigation of what is really the proper object of reverence in the Sacred Volume has caused that reverence to be most erroneously applied. When the learned Dr. Bloomfield prefers a "charge of irreverence for the Book which was intended to make men wise unto salvation" (Pref. p. x.), against those who, like Griesbach, would alter the commonly received text, he begs the question, that that text constitutes that Book; a point which cannot be conceded to him. That text is now clearly discovered to be, in numerous places, a corruption of "the Book" which demands our reverence; and our reverence is evinced in restoring it from the corruptions which it has sustained, to the most ancient and purest standard that we possess. Thus, our reverence for "the Book" is to be ascertained by determining the previous question, "Which is the Book to which our reverence is legitimately due?" If we direct it to the least corrupted, there is no irreverence; if to the most corrupted, the reverence savors of superstition and of bigotry. — GRANVILLE PENN: *Annotations to the Book of the New Covenant*, p. 43.

Few sources of error have been more copious, above all in the interpretation of the Scriptures, than the propensity to realize images — which, in fact, is a main element in all idolatry, — and to deduce general propositions from incidental and partial illustrations. — JULIUS CHARLES HARE: *The Victory of Faith*, p. 37.

Any human abstract which comes in between my Bible and me distorts Scripture, to some extent, by abridging it. It brings things together which were separate, giving them its own arrangement; it destroys delicate shades of meaning, and cuts off all the brilliancy and the life of the word. The dried flower in a collection still preserves its essential characteristics, and suffices for the classification of the botanist, though it has lost its shape, and its hang, and its delicate colors, and its sweet smell. But Christianity, dried up in a confession of faith, does not even retain all its characteristics: the proportion of its parts is all changed, and the eye of the believer can scarcely recognize it. — COUNT AGÉNOR DE GASPARIN: *The Schools of Doubt and the School of Faith*, p. 177.

When we see methods of interpretation applied to them which no other book will bear, and which would hold any one up to scorn if he should adopt them in explaining a classic, how can it be expected that the understanding and reason will not distrust them, and sooner or later be sure to revolt against them? Among all the abuses of the Old Testament, none are more conspicuous than those which result from sectarian views and purposes. What a mere lump of wax does the Bible become in the hands of a zealous defender of sect, perfectly mouldable at his pleasure! No laws of language or of grammar stand in his way. The original intention of the writer of the Scripture is little or nothing to the purpose. The occult meaning is summoned to his aid; and this is always ready, at his bidding, to assume every possible form. Armed in this way, his antagonists are cut down by whole ranks at a blow, and the standard of sect waves speedily over that of the Bible. — MOSES STUART: *Crit. Hist. of the Old-Test. Canon*, pp. 410–11.

Nothing can be more preposterous [than the law of rigidly literal interpretation]. All agree that the Scriptures ought to be so interpreted as to express the mind of their Author, and the sense which the writers of them intended to convey. . . . If there be doubtful and obscure passages in their writings, they are to be rendered clear and intelligible by those that are not obscure and doubtful. . . . To affirm a literal construction of those passages which are professedly contained in the most figurative and symbolical books of the Scriptures, would go far toward destroying all the fixed laws of sound interpretation. This would be to make prose of poetry, and bold imagery as though it were doctrinal statement. No sober man would interpret such passages as one would interpret a law, a deed, a contract, or a last will and testament. To do so would be a perversion of language, and an outrage upon common sense and common honesty. — DR. GARDINER SPRING: *Glory of Christ*, vol. ii. pp. 109–11.

No man will call in question what he concedes to be a real decision of God, however made; but there have been, and still are, those who think so much more of the verbal revelations of God than of any other, that they almost overlook the fact, that the foundations of all possible knowledge have been laid by God in the consciousness and the intuitive perceptions of the mind itself. Forgetful of this fact, they have often, by unfounded interpretations of Scripture, done violence to the mind, and overruled the decisions made by God himself through it, and then sought shelter in faith and mystery. — DR. EDWARD BEECHER: *Conflict of Ages*, p. 20.

SECT. VII. — PRINCIPLES OF CRITICISM AND INTERPRETATION, APPLICABLE CHIEFLY TO THE NEW TESTAMENT.

> A critic on the sacred book should be
> Candid and learned, dispassionate and free;
> Free from the wayward bias bigots feel,
> From fancy's influence, and intemperate zeal.
>
> COWPER.

§ 1. CRITICISM.

Before presenting the laws of criticism commonly laid down by Biblical scholars, it may be well, for the sake of those who have paid little attention to the subject, to quote the following observations on the manuscripts of the New Testament, by Dr. G. J. PLANCK (Introduction to Sacred Philology, p. 51): "By means of the most laborious researches, the latest efforts of criticism have resulted in the conclusion, that most of the manuscripts which we possess belong to three families, or may be traced to three recensions, the diversity of which cannot be doubted. An Alexandrine, a Constantinopolitan, and a Western copy, may have been the originals of all the manuscripts, amounting to some hundreds, which we have of the writings of the New Testament. Another recension, arising from Asia, may perhaps be added to these."

[1] The first place belongs to ancient, uninterpolated, good Greek copies. Their authority is paramount. From them chiefly should the text be derived. The nearer their testimony approaches to unanimity, the greater certainty belongs to it. And the authority of ancient manuscripts is unquestionably superior to that of the modern, though the number of the latter is very much greater. — DR. SAMUEL DAVIDSON: *Treatise on Biblical Criticism*, vol. ii. p. 380.

Dr. JOHN HEY (Lectures in Divinity, vol. i. p. 48) and other critics remark, what is obviously just, but not always borne in mind, that "the earlier manuscript, *cæteris paribus*, is more likely to be right than the later, because every copying is liable to new errors."

The modification to which this rule is subject, we present from the pen of G F. SEILER (Biblical Hermeneutics, § 235, 1): "As the value of a manuscript rests not only on its antiquity, but also on the authority of the class or family to which it belongs, and on the antiquity of that codex from which it was immediately taken, a manuscript of the tenth or eleventh century may thus be of far more value than one which has descended from the fifth century to our times; namely, when the manuscript of the tenth century can be proved to have been immediately derived from one of the third or fourth "

[2] Generally speaking, a more difficult reading, *cæteris paribus* as to evidence, is to be preferred to one which is altogether easy.... Transcribers would naturally change that which is obscure for that which is simple, and not *vice versâ*. — DR. S. P. TREGELLES: *The Book of Revelation*, Introduction, p. xxxi.

Referring to his own rule, which is similar to that just given, THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE (Introduction, p. 292) remarks: "This canon is the touchstone which distinguishes the true critics from the false. BENGEL, WETSTEIN, and GRIESBACH, critics of the first rank, have admitted its authority; but those of inferior order generally prefer the easy reading, for no other reason than because its meaning is most obvious."

[3] That reading should be regarded as genuine from which all the others may be naturally and easily derived. — DR. SAMUEL DAVIDSON: *Treatise on Biblical Criticism*, p. 376.

To illustrate this principle, Dr. DAVIDSON says: "In 1 Tim. iii. 16, if ὃς were the true reading, the alteration of it into θεὸς would readily suggest itself to those who knew that the 'mystery of godliness' related to the Divine Word. And ὃς naturally gave rise to ὅ, the neuter, for the sake of grammatical accuracy. But, if θεὸς were the original reading, it is difficult to understand why or how ὃς could come into the mind of critics and transcribers. Still more difficult is it to imagine ὅ giving rise to θεὸς or ὃς. Hence, by this canon, ὃς should be preferred."

[4] A reading contradictory to a doctrine which the same apostle has delivered in another passage is to be regarded as spurious, because contradictions are improbable in an accurate writer, and impossible in one who is divinely inspired. — J. D. MICHAELIS: *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. i. p. 328.

Or, as more simply expressed by G. F. SEILER (Biblical Hermeneutics, § 235, 13): "A reading which harmonizes with the style and manner of thinking of any of the writers of the New Testament is to be preferred to another which is less agreeable thereto."

[5] The reading of a passage which contains a disputed doctrine in religion is strongly to be suspected in the event of doubts arising respecting its genuineness, when there are only some testimonies against it; for it is fair to conjecture that it may have been altered through a zeal for orthodoxy. — G. F. SEILER: *Biblical Hermeneutics*. § 235, 14.

In accordance with this remark, Dr. DAVIDSON (Treatise on Biblical Criticism, vol. ii. p. 378) says that "readings which strongly favor orthodox

opinions are suspicious. Hence θεὸς, in 1 Tim. iii. 16, was made out of ὅς. 1 John v. 7 may also be referred to this head. So, too, θεὸν inserted in the fourth verse of Jude's Epistle. Perhaps the reading θεὸς in John i. 18, instead of υἱὸς, belongs here."

T. HARTWELL HORNE (Introduction, vol. i. p. 285) says, "It is a fact that some corruptions have been designedly made by those who are termed orthodox, and have subsequently been preferred when so made, in order to favor some received opinion, or to preclude an objection against it." Among other texts which have been thus corrupted, he instances Mark xiii. 32. Luke xxii. 43.

J. D. MICHAELIS (Introduction to the New Testament, vol. i. pp. 323-6) speaks to the same purpose.

[6] Conjectural readings, strongly supported by the sense, the connection, the nature of the language, or similar texts, may sometimes have probability, especially when it can be shown that they would easily have given occasion to the present reading. — DR. GILBERT GERARD: *Institutes of Biblical Criticism*, § 794.

So also T. HARTWELL HORNE, in his Introduction, vol. i. p. 289.

In his Principles of Biblical Interpretation, vol. i. pp. 199, 200, J. A. ERNESTI says: "Nor is conjectural criticism to be entirely neglected, which the most learned and right-thinking theologians have not scrupled occasionally to use; but rashness must be avoided, and a modest diligence must be exerted."

J. D. MICHAELIS (Introduction to New Testament, vol. ii. p. 392) observes: "There are certain passages in the Greek Testament, in which I can hardly refrain from the use of critical conjecture, in opposition to the authority of all our written documents; some of which passages the reader will find in my Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews. If it is asked why I would admit in those cases the right of critical conjecture in opposition to written authority, I answer, Because the text itself, after all the pains which have been bestowed upon it, still seems to be sometimes faulty, or at least to be capable of an alteration that would be more suitable to the context, and better adapted to the design of the writer." But, in p. 387, this learned and generally candid theologian censures the conduct of those "Socinians" who, endeavoring to act on his own principles, have suggested an alteration in the text of John i. 1, and Rom. ix. 5.

On the other hand, Dr. DAVIDSON (Treatise on Bib. Crit. vol. ii. pp. 371-2) says, that, in the New Testament, "critical conjecture is rendered wholly superfluous by the very copious array of proper resources; so copious that it will never desert the critic, or leave him at a loss in determining the reading of a particular passage." But he concedes, that, "although it is unnecessary, and therefore improper, to change the Greek words without authority, we may freely put forth our judgment in regard to accents, marks of aspiration, and punctuation, since these formed no part of the primitive text."

[7] A reading certainly expressed in an ancient version is of the same authority as if it had been found in a manuscript of the age when that version was made, and, consequently, of greater authority than if found in any single manuscript now extant; and that in proportion to the superior antiquity of the version. — DR. GILBERT GERARD: *Institutes*, § 336.

In his Introduction to Sacred Philology, p. 53, Dr. PLANCK makes the following important remarks: "Some of the versions which we have of it [of the New Testament] are considerably older than all our manuscripts.... In all cases, it may be presumed that these translations were made from manuscripts which at the time were not entirely new; and therefore the age of some may have almost reached that of the autographs. Consequently, whenever it can be determined, from one of these versions, what was the reading of the manuscript from which the version was made, its antiquity gives it an authority vastly superior to that which any manuscript now existing can claim."

[8] When a place is interpolated by the introduction of a supposititious clause, the works of the ancient fathers will sometimes enable us to infer with tolerable correctness, not only the spuriousness of the clause, but also the time when it may have been casually introduced into the text. If the place is quoted by many and various writers uniformly without the addition, this is a certain proof that it was added by some later hand. The first quotation, therefore, in which it occurs, affords grounds for conjecturing when and where the interpolation was first casually made. — G. J. PLANCK: *Introduction to Sacred Philology*, p. 56.

"Thus, for example," continues Dr. PLANCK, "it may be considered as one of the most important collateral proofs of the spuriousness of 1 John v. 7, that no Greek father, even to the fourth century, seems to have been acquainted with it, as it is cited by none for a considerable time after the breaking out of the Arian controversies; while, on the other hand, the earlier use which was made of it by Latin fathers places it almost beyond doubt, that the interpolation was first made in Latin copies, and from these introduced into Greek."

These few rules will probably be sufficient to give the mere English reader a general idea of the principles by which Biblical critics are guided in respect to the text chiefly of the New Testament. The subject is, unquestionably, interesting; for on the purity of the text depends, in a great measure, the correctness of the versions taken from it. But, as its study demands a great amount of erudition and labor, the unlearned reader of the Scriptures will, of course, have, in most cases of difficulty, to confide in

the results arrived at by men who have devoted their talents and their lives to sacred criticism; his confidence in their decisions being the stronger in proportion to the unanimity and acknowledged skill with which they have been made by critics of various and opposite denominations. It is consolatory to reflect, that, however desirable it may be to possess the records of divine revelation in a state approximating to that in which they were left by their respective writers, the essential truths of religion and of Christianity are not seriously affected by the corruptions of the original text, or by the different and numerous translations of the Bible which have been published.

§ 2. Interpretation.

[1] When different reasons for the meaning of a word oppose each other, greater weight ought to be given to grammatical than to dogmatical reasons; because a proposition may be strictly true which is not contained in the words of the text. — J. A. Ernesti: *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*, vol. i. p. 37.

[2] The more an interpreter changes places altogether with his author, in respect to his mode of thinking and his sentiments, the happier will he be in discovering and expressing the sense of his words. Hence it follows, — 1. That every good interpreter should lay aside for the time his own system, in order to study without prejudice the system of his author. 2. That he endeavor to guard, with all possible precaution, against transferring into ancient writings any modern opinions or dogmas, whether theological or philosophical. — G. F. Seiler: *Biblical Hermeneutics*, § 40.

These rules will receive illustration from the judicious remarks of Baden Powell (Connection of Natural and Divine Truth, p. 248): "When a commentator of the present day sets about to put a particular interpretation on a passage in an ancient author, he may, upon an examination of the critical sense of the words, and the construction of the sentence, make out a meaning which to him is plausible, and in itself consistent. But there is another question entirely distinct from this, too often quite overlooked, but essentially important to a true interpretation; viz., whether it is probable, from concurrent circumstances, that this was the sense, in point of fact, actually intended by the author. It is one thing to make out such a sense as, to our apprehension, the words may bear; quite another, to infer that this was the sense really in the mind of the writer."

[3] Ascertain the *usus loquendi*, or notion affixed to a word by the persons in general by whom the language either is now or formerly was spoken, and especially in the particular connection in which such notion is affixed. The meaning of a word used by any writer is the

meaning affixed to it by those for whom he immediately wrote; for there is a kind of natural compact between those who write and those who speak a language, by which they are mutually bound to use words in a certain sense. — T. HARTWELL HORNE: *Introduction*, vol. i. page 325.

In the application of this rule, the following remark by Dr. SEILER (Biblical Hermeneutics, § 261, 5) should be carefully attended to: "That is not always the true sense of the sayings of Jesus and of the writings of the apostles, which the Jews, by reason of their prejudices, attached to them; but that which they should have attached to them, from a consideration of the scope of the speakers and writers, John iii. 5–16; vi. 60, *et seq.*; viii. 51–57."

[4] As every (correct) writer is accustomed to use his words in one and the same sense in treating of the same subject, so, in interpreting the books of the New Testament, a difficult passage of an evangelist or apostle is best explained by a comparison of parallel passages in his own writings. The meaning of Paul's phraseology, for instance, is to be determined by a comparison with his own Epistles, and that of John by a comparison with his. — G. F. SEILER: *Biblical Hermeneutics*, § 252, 1.

The qualifying word "correct" is inserted probably by Seiler's editor, Dr. WRIGHT.

In applying this rule, the reader may be assisted by the following remarks of Archbishop WHATELY (Sermons on Various Subjects, p. 296): "It is an unsafe practice so to dwell on the interpretation of any particular word occurring in Scripture, as to imply that each term must have, like one of the technical terms of any science, exactly the same meaning in every passage where it is employed. It is not an uncommon plan, and it is a very dangerous one, to lay down precise definitions of the meaning of each of the principal words used in Scripture, and then to interpret every sentence in which they occur according to those definitions. The works of the sacred writers are popular, not scientific. They did not intend to confine themselves, like the author of any philosophical system, to some strict technical sense of each word, but expressed their meaning, in each passage, in such language as seemed, on each occasion, best fitted to convey it."

[5] Where a word has several significations in common use, that must be selected which best suits the passage in question, and which is consistent with an author's known character, sentiments, and situation, and the known circumstances under which he wrote. — THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE: *Introduction*, vol. i. p. 325.

Or, as expressed more briefly by Dr. G. J. PLANCK (Introduction to Sacred Philology, p. 147): "In interpreting a writing, constant reference should be had to the character, views, and known principles of the writer from whom it originates." For this rule he assigns the following reason, — "that a man of understanding will not readily act in opposition to his own design; will not, in general, easily contradict himself; will not, without some evident cause, alter his opinions."

[6] Wherever any doctrine is manifest, either from the whole tenor of divine revelation or from its scope, it must not be weakened or set aside by a few obscure passages. — T. HARTWELL HORNE: *Introduction*, vol. i. p. 343.

This rule is frequently neglected; but no one will theoretically deny its validity. Dr. J. P. SMITH (Scripture Testimony to the Messiah, vol. i. p. 57) well remarks, that "it is contrary to all just rules of evidence, and to the conduct of the best and wisest part of mankind, in relation to innumerable cases, philosophical, moral, and political, to violate or renounce great principles, which have been sufficiently established by prior proofs, because minor difficulties arise of which we are not able to find a solution."

[7] General terms are used sometimes in their whole extent, and sometimes in a restricted sense; and whether they are to be understood in the one way or in the other must depend upon the scope, subject-matter, context, and parallel passages. — T. HARTWELL HORNE: *Introduction*, vol. i. p. 325.

Dr. GERARD (Institutes, § 844) illustrates his rule, which is the same as that just quoted, by a great number of examples. Christians of all denominations will admit its justness and importance; but probably few apply it without sometimes being influenced by dogmatical prepossessions.

[8] Before we conclude upon the sense of a text, so as to prove any thing by it, we must be sure that such sense is not repugnant to natural reason. — T. HARTWELL HORNE: *Introduction*, vol. i. p. 326.

In p. 394, the same writer justly observes, that "articles of revelation may be above our reason; but no doctrine which comes from God can be irrational, or contrary to those moral truths which are clearly perceived by the mind of man."

Dr. ROBERT SOUTH (Animadversions on Sherlock's Vindication, p. 133) says: "Whatsoever is a truth in natural reason cannot be contradicted by any other truth declared by revelation, since it is impossible for any one truth to contradict another."

To the same purpose might be quoted a host of other writers; but, though few would venture to deny the truth of the principle here laid down, there are many who seem to act very inconsistently in its application

In our endeavors, however, to arrive at the true sense of any passage in Scripture, it would be prejudging the matter to take for granted that that sense cannot be repugnant to reason; for, though the supernatural revelations which are contained in the sacred books never can contradict the judgments formed by a right use of the intellectual powers, there is no evidence for the dogma that all portions of Scripture were given by infallible inspiration. Our sole object should therefore be merely to ascertain the meaning of a sacred author, without assuming the foregone conclusion that it is impossible for him to err, to express a doctrine contrary to reason, or to be inconsistent with the views of such other writers as have had better opportunities of arriving at the truth, either by natural or supernatural means. If, after an investigation pursued in no spirit of reckless scepticism, but with a manly freedom blended with caution and docility, a passage should be found manifestly opposed to the highest and best conceptions of our minds, we may, from the known character and sentiments of the author in whose compositions it appears, have some grounds, even without the authority of any extant manuscript, for believing the text of that passage to be corrupt or interpolated; but, if faithful to the duty of using aright the natural gifts bestowed on us by Heaven, we cannot accept, as a declaration of the divine will, the doctrine which it expresses.

Suppose, for instance, that a man has been led, by the united voices of reason and revelation, — by the light of nature and the whole spirit of Christianity, — to believe that it is the design of the Creator and Father of the human race to bring each and all of his children into the fold of the Saviour, through such trials and sufferings as are best adapted to purify and exalt their nature; and suppose, too, he find some passages in the Bible unequivocally declaring or implying the doctrine of unmitigated torture to multitudes throughout eternity, — he must not bend or distort the language so as to make it speak his own sentiments, though, according to the supposition, these are founded on a solid basis. We say, "unequivocally declaring or implying;" for, if the passages be merely ambiguous or obscure, they cannot justly be regarded as erroneous; or, if highly figurative, they may fail to give the precise doctrinal views of the writer; but they are not necessarily opposed to reason, and may admit an interpretation which is both rational and consistent with the writer's opinions as clearly expressed in other places of his compositions.

In this sentiment, that no proposition, repugnant to reason, though it were found in books containing God's revealed will, is entitled to credence, we are supported, more or less, by the authority of eminent Trinitarians Thus S. T. COLERIDGE, in Literary Remains (Works, vol. v. pp. 193–4), says "If we are quite certain that any writing pretending to divine origin contains gross contradictions to demonstrable truths *in eodem genere*, or commands that outrage the clearest principles of right and wrong, then we may be equally certain that the pretence is a blasphemous falsehood; inasmuch as the compatibility of a document with the conclusions of self-evident reason, and with the laws of conscience, is a condition *à priori* of any evidence adequate to the proof of its having been revealed by God."

Thus, also, Dr. SOUTH, in pp. 133–4 of his Animadversions on Sherlock's Vindication, asks the Dean "whether it be a proposition true in natural reason, that God is one infinite mind or spirit;" and says, that, if this be granted, the doctrine that God is three infinite minds or spirits cannot be proved true from revelation, "since the certain truth of the first proposition supposed and admitted must needs disprove the truth of that revelation which pretends to establish the second. . . . If it be certainly true from reason that God is one infinite mind or spirit, no revelation can or ought to be pleaded that he is three distinct infinite minds or spirits."

We do not, however, believe that, as to the nature and character of the Divine Being, there are any contradictions to reason found in the New Testament. We have no doubt that the evangelists and apostles all agree in recognizing the strict Oneness of God, — the essential and unqualified Supremacy of the heavenly Father; a doctrine as rational as it is sublime. But if, on the other hand, the dogma of a Trinity in Unity were certainly taught by any of the sacred writers, we should feel, that, however repulsive it might seem to reason and common sense, we had no right, as interpreters, to carry our own notions into Scripture, and to rationalize its absurdities.

[9] No doctrine can belong to the analogy of faith which is founded on a single text; for every essential principle of religion is delivered in more than one place. — Dr. GILBERT GERARD: *Institutes*, § 503.

T. H. HORNE (i. 343), having defined the analogy of faith to be "the constant and perpetual harmony of Scripture in the fundamental points of faith and practice," lays down the same canon as that given by Dr. Gerard.

Bishop HAMPDEN (in Bampton Lectures, p. 55) says emphatically that "there must be, in fact, a repeated revelation to authorize us to assert that this or that conclusion represents to us some truth concerning God."

S. F. N. MORUS, in his Treatise on the Style of the New Testament (Biblical Repository, vol. i. p. 430), makes the following sensible remarks on this rule of interpretation: "The analogy of faith and doctrine is contained in the principal maxims and precepts of religion clearly taught. This is, as I understand it, a summary of all religious doctrine; for if such evident propositions as that God is one, that he created the world, that he governs all things, that he reforms us by his truth, and that there is a future state of rewards and punishments, be collected, they will constitute a summary of religion; and this constitutes the standard according to which every thing must be interpreted, so that all shall harmonize. It is wrong to make this analogy consist in the doctrines approved by any one sect, as the Lutherans, Calvinists, or Papists; for then there would be many analogies: each sect would hold up its own religious system as the standard. The system of no sect can ever become the law of interpretation; for this refers to the plain and evident testimony of Scripture. Nor does the analogy of doctrine consist in the system of any particular person; for these systems are disposed in order, and the doctrine explained in a manner merely to suit the authors. Such systems cannot be made a rule of interpretation"

GENERAL REMARKS.

Could they who dogmatize on sacred subjects peremptorily, be persuaded to examine them carefully, we might soon bring to an issue those unhappy disputes about the doctrines of Christianity, which, though started perhaps with honest intentions, have yet been carried on with a most unchristian temper. . . . By examination I do not mean the rapid effusion of scriptural phrases, which it is far easier to accumulate than to connect; which those who display most ostentatiously do not always explain most intelligibly; and in the repetition of which it is possible for the understanding to slumber, while the memory is exercised, and the fancy captivated. But, in the investigation of doctrines on which eternity is suspended, it is necessary to trace every word through its significations, whether primary or subordinate, common or appropriate; to analyze every sentence into its component parts; to mark the connection of those parts to each other, and the relation of the whole to preceding or subsequent passages; to account for local and temporary circumstances; to bear in mind on what occasion any doctrine is introduced, and to what persons it is addressed; to determine ambiguous texts by such as are more definite, — the obscure by such as are plain; to support general doctrines by particular proofs, not with the licentiousness of arbitrary assumption, but the calmness and precision of elaborate induction; not to be staggered by accidental difficulties, the solution of which progressive knowledge or persevering industry may supply; never to be seduced by indirect or partial expressions into a desertion of those leading, indisputable truths on which revelation is known to hinge. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Sermons on Faith and Morals; in Works*, vol. vi. pp. 616–17.

The principles of interpreting Scripture which we have quoted are taken from writers of eminent merit belonging to the orthodox body, and will probably be regarded by all Protestants, worthy of the name, as substantially correct, whatever notions they may hold respecting the inspiration of the Bible, and the canonicity of its various books. Their bearing on the great question at issue between Trinitarians, and the believers in the simple oneness of the Divine Being, will often be noticed in the succeeding volumes of this work. In attempting to apply them, may both writer and reader be pervaded by a single-minded desire to ascertain the truth!

CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIANITY INTELLIGIBLE, RATIONAL, AND PRACTICAL.

SECT. I. — THE TEACHINGS OF THE SAVIOUR DISTINGUISHED FOR THEIR CLEARNESS AND SIMPLICITY.

> **All the doctrine which Christ taught and gave**
> **Was clear as heaven from whence it came.**
>
> GEORGE HERBERT.

In many of the quotations introduced into the preceding chapter, the duty of tasking, to the utmost extent, the faculties of the human understanding in the study and interpretation of Holy Scripture, is strongly urged on the attention of Christians; and rules and directions are given for the purpose of facilitating inquiry, of guarding against error, and of leading to the possession of truth. All this implies, that the Bible is not to be regarded as a volume which "he who runneth may read," — which one may hastily or passively peruse, and at the same time perfectly understand; but as a collection of sacred books, for the due appreciation of which, and for the comprehension of its various and important contents, our intellectual powers and our moral affections should alike be devoted. Indeed, apart from the value of the facts it records, or the principles it develops, no book requires more assiduous and patient study to understand than the Bible; for there is none perhaps which as a whole is so hard, difficult, or obscure.

The documents of which it consists are very ancient, some of them the oldest of extant compositions. They were written in languages or in dialects which have long ceased to be spoken, and with which the best educated men are but imperfectly familiar. They abound in allusions to customs, manners, opinions, and modes of thought, which are very different from those which prevail at the present day in Western Europe and in the New World. They have been more or less corrupted in their passage to our times. They have been transferred into innumerable versions, all differing one from another in a vast variety of particulars. They have been commented on by fathers, by schoolmen, by priests, and by critics; by adherents of the Romish, Greek, and Protestant churches; by Athanasians and Arians, Sabellians and Socinians, Lutherans and Calvinists; by fanatics, ranters, rationalists, and transcendentalists; and, widely as these disagree in opinion,

they have lent to each and all of them such real or apparent support as hath sufficed to satisfy the consciences and the minds of them all. However some Protestants, in their zeal against Popery, may affect to controvert the fact, a book from which such a variety of conflicting opinions as those held by these sectaries has been professedly taken, must be difficult to understand. It would be idle to deny it. Even persons who are classed under the same category have elicited, from the Bible, dogmas which are far from being the same. Neither the philosophers who have found in the Scriptures the truths of astronomy and geology, or of moral and mental science; nor the mystics, with their doctrine of a double sense, their correspondences, their spiritual influences, their reveries, and their dreams, are at one in their respective interpretations of the contents of the Bible. The first chapter of Genesis, so simple in phraseology and so sublime in conception, will, if we judge of the future from the past, never be so explained as to meet the unanimous consent of astronomers, geologists, and theologians. The precise boundary between the myths and the histories of the Hebrews has not yet been ascertained, and perhaps never will be. The prophecies of the Jewish bards, obscure to those who uttered them, have not been rendered altogether clear by the light of facts accomplished; and a portion of doubt and mystery may still hang over them. No Harmony has harmonized, or probably ever will harmonize, the discrepancies existing in the divine and truthful Gospels. The proem to John's beautiful narrative of the Saviour, for the comprehension of which such vast stores of ancient learning have been in countless modes ransacked and displayed, and from which have been derived opinions the most varied in hue and texture, may never find a solution which will be altogether satisfactory to the scholar and the Christian. The Epistles of Paul — "in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction" — have been made to speak the strangest, the most uncouth and contradictory dogmas; and the man is yet to come who will give such a representation of the apostle's views as will settle the controversies which have so long afflicted the church. The contents of the Apocalypse, which have so often baffled the prying ingenuity of good and wise men, may be fully revealed to the human mind only when "time shall be no more."

Some of these, or similar difficulties and obscurities, may, as we have intimated, remain for ever on the pages of the Bible; but there are others which have undoubtedly arisen more from the prepossessions and the passions of interpreters than from any imperfection in the book itself; and it may reasonably be anticipated that a reduction of their number will be gradually effected by the labors of ingenuous and liberal-minded men.

But, even now, the Bible is not, throughout its various portions, a book only of dark and intricate passages leading to no certain conclusion. It abounds in narratives, whose beautiful simplicity and tender pathos are grateful to the ear of childhood; in pictures of divine heroism and disinterestedness which arrest the eye of youth; in songs of purity and piety which lift to higher realms the common mind of manhood; in words of

comfort and consolation which impart heavenly strength and holy trust to the heart of feebleness and age.

The Bible is a difficult book; or, rather, it is a collection of books, portions of which are very dark and doubtful in their import, if not erroneous in some of their statements. But it contains various revelations of the Supreme Wisdom and Infinite Goodness; and all revelations must, to those for whom they were intended, be, from their very nature, resplendent with light, and impart it to the organ of moral and intellectual vision if in a normal or undiseased state. Clouds and darkness may seem to us, in some measure, to brood over the communications of God to the antediluvians and the patriarchs, — for these were personal or family revelations; or over such as were vouchsafed to the Jews through Moses and the prophets, — for these were national; though many of them speak, in characters the most perspicuous, of the pure spirituality, the impartial justice, and universal government of the one Jehovah.

But the gospel of Jesus Christ — including in the term not only the teachings of the Saviour, but his life and his character, his labors and his sufferings, his death and his resurrection — was a revelation, designed, not for particular persons or families, or for a peculiar nation, but for all mankind; and the impress of universality and legibility are therefore stamped on its divine lineaments. By a few simple strokes from the pens of the evangelists, Jesus is still seen, as he was some eighteen or nineteen hundred years ago, walking on the hills and the plains, or by the rivers and the lakes, of Palestine; mixing with his countrymen in their lofty temple and humbler synagogues, in their cities and villages, in their streets and roads, in their houses and in their fishing-boats; familiar with seamen, with publicans, with the erring and abandoned, with the pious and the gentle-hearted; telling them, in no equivocal terms, of the care and providence of their all-bountiful Father, of their solemn responsibleness to God for all they think and feel and say and do, and of their various duties to themselves and their brethren of mankind; speaking words of comfort and hope to the penitent, but of warning and woe to the self-righteous; imparting health and energy and life to the sick, the feeble, the dying, and the dead; and pronouncing benedictions on little children, on the humble-minded, on the mourners, on the meek, on the hungerers and thirsters after righteousness, on the merciful, on the pure in heart, and on those who suffer for the name of Christ. We see this good being murdered for his goodness by the proud priests of his nation. We see his body taken from the cruel cross, put into a tomb, and in a few hours rising again with renewed life. We see him, "from the mount called Olivet," ascending to that Being who commissioned him, and leaving, as a sacred legacy, the image and remembrances of himself, and the spirit of his benign religion, not to the narrow-minded Jews, but to the world at large. This great Revealer of the will of God — this best Representative and Manifestation of Immortal Goodness — spoke not, indeed, in the Anglo-Saxon or in any other modern tongue, but in the now-obsolete Syro-Chaldaic; yet its translated tones of love and righteousness sound on the ear, and address the heart, of our common humanity. Though he wore a Jewish

garb, alluded to local and temporary usages, accommodated his words to unphilosophical ideas, and spoke in Oriental parables and paradoxes, he stands before us, in the pages of the simple evangelists, as the clearest expounder of God's messages and the most perfect teacher of eternal truth. No corruption of the Greek text, and no false rendering, have obscured, or can obscure, the import of the term "Father," which, with so profound yet so clear and expressive a meaning, Jesus applied to God in his discourses; which he uttered in his prayers and in his thanksgivings; and which he taught his disciples to use in their daily petitions to Heaven. It contains within itself a universal revelation, — a revelation intelligible to the capacities of the human mind and to the affections of the human heart in all stages of development, and growing more significant and luminous as men and women advance in the scale of intelligence, virtue, and holiness.

It would be easy to pursue the same strain of remark, by exhibiting the perspicuity and the practicability of other principles which our Lord taught and exemplified; and by showing that he avoided the presentation and discussion of topics, which, from their inherent obscurity or mysteriousness, could not generally be understood, or be brought home to the minds and hearts of all men. But the sentiments of eminent Trinitarians on this subject, which we are about to introduce, will render any further observations on our part unnecessary.

He delighted not to discourse of sublime mysteries (although his deep wisdom comprehended them all), nor of subtle speculations and intricate questions, such as might amuse and perplex rather than instruct and profit his auditors, but usually did feed his auditors with the most common and useful truths, and that in the most familiar and intelligible language. — DR. ISAAC BARROW: *Works*, vol. i. p. 404.

Surely, the way to heaven, that Christ hath taught us, is plain and easy, if we have but honest hearts: we need not many criticisms, many school distinctions, to come to a right understanding of it. Surely, Christ came not to ensnare us and entangle us with captious niceties, or to puzzle our heads with deep speculations, and lead us through hard and craggy notions into the kingdom of heaven. I persuade myself that no man shall ever be kept out of heaven for not comprehending mysteries, that were beyond the reach of his shallow understanding, if he had but an honest and good heart, that was ready to comply with Christ's commandments. "Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven?" that is, with high speculations to bring down Christ from thence; or, "Who shall descend into the abyss beneath?" that is, with deep-searching thoughts to fetch up Christ from thence; but, lo! "the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart" .... I speak not here against a free and ingenuous

inquiry into all truth, according to our several abilities and opportunities. I plead not for the captivating and enthralling of our judgments to the dictates of men. I do not disparage the natural improvement of our understanding faculties by true knowledge, which is so noble and gallant a perfection of the mind. But the thing which I aim against is the dispiriting of the life and vigor of our religion by dry speculations, and making it nothing but a mere dead skeleton of opinions, — a few dry bones, without any flesh and sinews, tied up together; and the misplacing of all our zeal upon an eager prosecution of these, which should be spent to better purpose upon other objects. — DR. RALPH CUDWORTH: *Sermon* 1, *appended to Intellectual System of the Universe*, vol. ii. pp. 554, 556.

The Lord Jesus, in wisdom and tender mercy, established a law of grace, and rule of life, pure and perfect, but simple and plain; laying the condition of man's salvation more in the honesty of the believing heart than in the strength of wit, and subtlety of a knowing head. He comprised the truths which were of necessity to salvation in a narrow room; so that the Christian faith was a matter of great plainness and simplicity. . . . By the occasion of heretics' quarrel and errors, the serpent steps in, and will needs be a spirit of zeal in the church; and he will so overdo against heretics, that he persuades them they must enlarge their creed, and add this clause against one, and that against another, and all was but for the perfecting and preserving of the Christian faith. . . . He had got them, with a religious, zealous cruelty to their own and others' souls, to lay all their salvation, and the peace of the church, upon some unsearchable mysteries about the Trinity, which God either never revealed, or never clearly revealed, or never laid so great a stress upon. Yet he persuades them, that there was Scripture-proof enough for these; only the Scripture spoke it but in the premises or in darker terms, and they must but gather into their creed the consequences, and put it into plainer expressions, which heretics might not so easily corrupt, pervert, or evade. — RICHARD BAXTER: *The Right Method; in Practical Works*, vol. ix. pp. 192–3.

Of the divine Founder of our religion, it is impossible to peruse the evangelical histories, without observing how little he favored the vanity of inquisitiveness; how much more rarely he condescended to satisfy curiosity than to relieve distress; and how much he desired that his followers should rather excel in goodness than in knowledge. — DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON: *Rambler*, No. 81.

Christianity is a religion intended for general use: it appeals to the common feelings of our nature, and never clashes with the unbiased dictates of our reason. We may therefore rank it among the beneficial tendencies, as well as the peculiar evidences, of such a religion, that the Author of it abstained from all abstruse speculations, &c. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Works*, vol. v. p. 507.

While Jesus requires us to believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, he has nowhere taught us or required us to believe the learned distinctions respecting this doctrine which have been introduced since the fourth century. The undeserved benefits which they had received from Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, were the great subjects to which Jesus pointed his followers in the passage above cited [Matt. xxviii. 19], and in others; that they were now able to understand and worship God in a more perfect manner, to approach him as their Father and Benefactor in spirit and in truth; that their minds were now enlightened by the instructions given them by the Son of God, who had been sent into the world to be their Teacher, and that their souls were redeemed by his death; that, in consequence of what Christ had already done and would yet do, they might be advanced in moral perfection, and made holy, — a work specially ascribed to the aids and influence of the Holy Spirit. . . . He did not reveal this doctrine to men to furnish them with matter for speculation and dispute, and did not, therefore, prescribe any formulas by which the one or the other could have been excited. — G. C. KNAPP: *Christ. Theol.*, sect. xxxiii. 2.

Jesus is not the author of a dogmatic theology, but the author and finisher of faith, Heb. xii. 2; not the founder of a school, but emphatically the founder of religion and of the church. On this account he did not propound dogmas dressed in a scientific garb; but he taught the word of God in a simply human and popular manner, for the most part in parables and sentences. — K. R. HAGENBACH: *Compendium of the History of Doctrines*, vol. i. § 17.

There is something most highly interesting and instructive in the manner in which the Saviour adapted his communications to the occasions on which they were to be made, and to the purposes which he endeavored to effect by them. A modern preacher would have carried the metaphysics of theology all over the villages of Galilee, and would have puzzled the woman of Samaria, or the inquiring ruler, with questions about the nature of the Godhead, or the distinction between moral and natural inability. But Jesus Christ pressed simple duty. . . . . The two great elementary principles of religion are these, —

the duty of strong benevolent interest in every fellow-being, and of submission and gratitude towards the Supreme. Jesus Christ has said, that these constitute the foundation on which all revealed religion rests. — JACOB ABBOTT: *The Corner-stone*, pp. 187, 339.

Christ was the divinest of theologians, because he taught not in abstraction, but exemplification; not in dogmas merely, but deeds; in the ardor of his heart, as well as the energy of his mind; in the gentleness of his demeanor, and the beneficent industry of his life. . . . . His ambition was to teach, not so much the new as the true, and the true not as a logical formula or dogmatical proposition, but as a transparent and comprehensive religious sentiment, enlightening the conscience, spiritualizing the heart, elevating the soul, and regenerating the entire family of man, as it swept outward with infinite expansiveness to embrace the world. . . . . He knew that the fundamental principles of religion which he taught lay so near to the reason and conscience of mankind, that they needed only to have their attention directed towards them, in order to secure assent. For this reason, Jesus delivered his instructions with such a clearness and simplicity, such an energy and power, that they commended themselves immediately to every ingenuous heart. . . . He realized, in the presence of the human race, an ideal of human perfection level to popular comprehension and within the reach of all. In his person, his demeanor, and his speech, the world saw the infinite brought down to our standard, so realized that we can easily understand it, and feel the majesty and beauty of that love to Christ which is nothing but the imitation of God brought near to the roused intellect and heart. . . . The doctrines of Christ were at the same time the most practical and profound. His precepts were level to the capacities of a child, and yet they contained principles which the most matured and soaring intellect could never outrun. . . . . By the representation which Jesus gave of the doctrine of the one only and Supreme God, and of the nature of acceptable worship, very important objects were to be accomplished. He exhibited true religion with such clearness and simplicity, that those of the humblest capacities, even children, might comprehend it. . . . Christ would teach man, that there is no spiritual progress for him till he discovers that truth is as much a thing to be felt as a thing to be perceived; and that it is only a very small portion of truth that the philosopher's analysis, the logician's syllogisms, theological dogmas, and sectarian creeds, can impart to the immortal soul. — E. L. MAGOON: *Republican Christianity*, pp. 58, 93, 97–9, 240–1.

SECT. II. — THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY SUITABLE TO ALL CAPACITIES.

My gracious God, how plain
Are thy directions given!
Oh, may I never read in vain,
But find the path to heaven!

ISAAC WATTS.

All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them. — WESTMINSTER DIVINES: *Confession of Faith*, chap. i. 7.

The Christian religion is, as GREGORY NAZIANZEN says, *simplex et nuda, nisi prave in artem difficillimam converteretur:* it is a plain, an easy, a perspicuous truth. — JOHN DONNE: *Sermons*, No. VII.

S. T. COLERIDGE, by whom we borrow this extract, beautifully says in his note on it (Literary Remains, in Works, vol. v. p. 90), that "a religion of ideas, spiritual truths, or truth-powers, — not of notions and conceptions, the manufacture of the understanding, — is therefore *simplex et nuda*, that is, immediate; like the clear blue heaven of Italy, deep and transparent, an ocean unfathomable in its depth, and yet ground all the way." Seeing, however, that the representation of Christianity as a religion which may easily be understood by all will naturally lead to Unitarianism, COLERIDGE exclaims, "Oh, let not the *simplex et nuda* of Gregory be perverted to the Socinian, 'plain and easy for the meanest understandings'!"

Because [the] Christian religion was intended and instituted for the good of mankind, whether poor or rich, learned or unlearned, simple or prudent, wise or weak, it was fitted with such plain, easy, and evident directions, both for things to be known and things to be done, in order to the attainment of the end for which it was designed, that might be understood by any capacity that had the ordinary and common use of reason or human understanding, and by the common assistance of the divine grace might be practised by them. The *credenda*, or things to be known or believed, as simply necessary to those ends, are but few and intelligible, briefly delivered in that summary of [the] Christian religion usually called the Apostles' Creed. — SIR MATTHEW HALE: *A Discourse of Religion*, p. 4.

Considering the wisdom and goodness of Almighty God, I cannot possibly believe but that all things necessary to be believed and practised by Christians, in order to their eternal salvation, are plainly contained in the Holy Scriptures. God surely hath not dealt so hardly with mankind as to make any thing necessary to be believed or practised by us which he hath not made sufficiently plain to the capacity of the unlearned as well as of the learned. God forbid that it should be impossible for any man to be saved and to get to heaven without a great deal of learning to direct and carry him thither, when the far greatest part of mankind have no learning at all! It was well said by ERASMUS, that "it was never well with the Christian world since it began to be a matter of so much subtilty and wit for a man to be a true Christian." — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermon* 44; *in Works*, vol. iii. p. 219.

I know not whence it comes to pass, that men love to make plain things obscure, and like nothing in religion but riddles and mysteries. God, indeed, was pleased to institute a great many ceremonies (and many of them of very obscure signification) in the Jewish worship, to awe their childish minds into a greater veneration for his divine majesty. But, in these last days, God hath sent his own Son into the world to make a plain and easy and perfect revelation of his will, to publish such a religion as may approve itself to our reason, and captivate our affections by its natural charms and beauties. And there cannot be a greater injury to the Christian religion than to render it obscure and unintelligible; and yet too many there are who despise every thing which they understand, and think nothing a sufficient trial of their faith but what contradicts the sense and reason of mankind. — DR. WILLIAM SHERLOCK: *Discourse concerning the Knowledge of Christ*, chap. iv. sect. 2.

Whence is it, that, amidst all the obscurities that surround us, God has placed practical duties in a light so remarkably clear? Whence is it that doctrines most clearly revealed are, however, so expressed as to furnish difficulties, if not substantial and real, yet likely and apparent; and that the practical part is so clearly revealed that it is not liable to any objections which have any show or color of argument? My brethren, either we must deny the wisdom of the Creator, or we must infer this consequence, that what is most necessary to be known, what will be most fatal to man to neglect, what we ought most inviolably to preserve, is practical religion. — JAMES SAURIN: *Sermons*, vol. ii. pp. 106–7.

The Christian religion, according to my mind, is a very simple thing, intelligible to the meanest capacity, and what, if we are at pains to join practice to knowledge, we may make ourselves thoroughly acquainted with, without turning over many books. It is the distinguishing excellence of this religion, that it is entirely popular, and fitted, both in its doctrines and in its evidences, to all conditions and capacities of reasonable creatures, — a character which does not belong to any other religious or philosophical system that ever appeared in the world. I wonder to see so many men, eminent both for their piety and for their capacity, laboring to make a mystery of this divine institution. If God vouchsafes to reveal himself to mankind, can we suppose that he chooses to do so in such a manner as that none but the learned and contemplative can understand him? The generality of mankind can never, in any possible circumstances, have leisure or capacity for learning, or profound contemplation. If, therefore, we make Christianity a mystery, we exclude the greater part of mankind from the knowledge of it; which is directly contrary to the intention of its Author, as is plain from his explicit and reiterated declarations. In a word, I am perfectly convinced, that an intimate acquaintance with the Scripture, particularly the Gospels, is all that is necessary to our accomplishment in true Christian knowledge. — DR. JAMES BEATTIE: *Letters*, pp. 67–8.

Every truth contained in divine revelation, or deducible from it, is not conveyed with equal perspicuity, nor is in itself of equal importance. There are some things so often and so clearly laid down in Scripture, that hardly any who profess the belief of revealed religion pretend to question them. About these there is no controversy in the church. Such are the doctrines of the unity, the spirituality, the natural and moral attributes, of God; the creation, preservation, and government of the world by him; the principal events in the life of Jesus Christ, as well as his crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension; the doctrine of a future judgment, heaven and hell; together with all those moral truths which exhibit the great outlines of our duty to God, our neighbor, and ourselves. In general, it will be found, that what is of most importance to us to be acquainted with and believed, is oftenest and most clearly inculcated; and that, as we find there are degrees in belief as well as in evidence, it is a very natural and just conclusion, that our belief in those points is most rigorously required which are notified to us in Scripture with the clearest evidence..... Is . . . the doctrine of revelation abstruse and metaphysical, and

therefore not to be apprehended by any who have not been accustomed to the most profound and abstract researches? By no means. The character which Holy Writ gives of its own doctrine is the very reverse of this. It is pure and plain, such as "enlighteneth the eyes, and maketh wise the simple." . . . The most essential truths are ever the most perspicuous. — DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL: *Lectures on Systematic Theology and Pulpit Eloquence*, pp. 16, 17; 137, 139.

It may be reckoned a necessary characteristic of divine revelation, that it shall be delivered in a manner the most adapted to what are vulgarly called the meanest capacities; and by this perspicuity, both of precept and of doctrine, the whole Bible is remarkably distinguished. . . . Obscurities undoubtedly have arisen from the great antiquity of the Sacred Writings, from the changes which time makes in language, and from some points of ancient history, become dark or doubtful; but these affect only particular passages, and bring no difficulty at all upon the general doctrine of revelation, which is the only thing of universal and perpetual importance. — BISHOP HORSLEY: *Sermons*. No. VII. p. 76.

It has been an opinion invariably received in all Protestant countries, that whatever is necessary to be believed is intelligible to all persons who read the Scriptures with no other view than to investigate and embrace the truth. It would be easy to produce a cloud of authorities to this purpose. — DR. JOHN SYMONDS: *Observations upon the Expediency of Revising the Present English Version of the Epistles in the New Testament*, p. xv.

While there are many things which God conceals, and thereby advances his glory, he has made manifest whatever is essential for man to know. Whatever is intimately connected with our duty is most plainly taught: whatever is important to our welfare and happiness is fully revealed. — ROBERT HALL: *Sermon on* Prov. xxv. 2; *in Works*, vol. iii. p. 328.

It has been repeatedly and most justly noticed, both as matter of admiration and of gratitude, as at once among the strongest evidences and the most valuable characteristics of our Christian faith, that, under the covenant and dispensation of grace, the things most essentially necessary to man's salvation are revealed in the plainest and most unequivocal terms, are made (wheresoever the perversity of the human will does not oppose itself to the teaching of the Spirit of God) clear and intelligible to all men. — J. J. CONYBEARE: *Bampton Lectures*, page 1.

The dubious twilight of mystical devotion, and the vague apprehension of unrevealed mysteries, surely cannot but seem greatly at variance with the very nature of Christianity, to those who regard it as fully and finally disclosed in the written word. . . . That which is disclosed is perspicuous and undisguised; and with this alone it is that we are concerned: with what may be hidden from us, we have nothing to do. Religion to us exists only so far as it is clearly revealed. The acknowledgment of this, upon its proper evidence, is faith: the suspicion that there may be something beyond, with which we are yet concerned, is the spirit of mysticism. — BADEN POWELL: *Tradition Unveiled*, p. 74; *apud* "*Is the Church of England a Scriptural Church?*" pp. 12, 13.

The truth is, that a very large part of this profound theology is nothing better than a mere jargon of words without meaning, unintelligible even to "the learned" themselves, and in respect of which the people have already this great advantage over such teachers, — that the people are aware of their own ignorance of these matters, while their teachers pride themselves on understanding what really cannot be understood. Sometimes, indeed, when they are pressed with objections to their own explanations of Scripture doctrines, divines are apt to say that these are mysteries which cannot be understood by even the most exalted intellects, and that it is impious to pry into them too curiously, or bring them to the test of reason. But then the answer is obvious: "If you do not understand these things, why do you undertake to explain them? To every thing, indeed, which God has revealed, the deepest reverence and the lowest submission are due; but not so to man's explication of it. If we venture to give a further account of what he has said, it should, at least, be a rational and intelligible account." . . . Many ingenious theories have, indeed, from time to time, been devised and set forth to explain and reconcile the statements of Scripture with respect to the Trinity, the atonement, the divine decrees, and other matters, on which the Bible gives us only imperfect information. On such subjects, men have taken up the hints which the sacred writers seemed to drop, and sought to follow them up by conjecturing what the full account of the matter *may* be; and then they have gone on to settle that this account, which they have conjectured, *must* be the true one, because it gives what they think a satisfactory solution of much that is difficult without it; and so they have finally made their own theories a part of the gospel. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Cautions for the Times*, pp. 275–7.

SECT. III. — CHRISTIANITY NOT A RELIGION OF SPECULATIVE OR THEORETICAL PROPOSITIONS, BUT OF VITAL FACTS AND PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES.

> To them, the sounding jargon of the schools
> Seems what it is, — a cap and bell for fools:
> The light they walk by, kindled from above,
> Shows them the shortest way to life and love.
>
> COWPER.

Instead of those simple and clear ideas which render the truth and majesty of the Christian religion sensible, and which satisfy a man's reason and move his heart, we meet with nothing in several bodies of divinity but metaphysical notions, curious and needless questions, distinctions, and obscure terms. In a word, we find there such intricate theology, that the very apostles themselves, if they came into the world again, would not be able to understand it, without the help of a particular revelation. This scholastic divinity has done more mischief to religion than we are able to express. There is not any thing that has more corrupted the purity of the Christian religion, that has more obscured matters, multiplied controversies, disturbed the peace of the church, or given rise to so many heresies and schisms. — JOHN F. OSTERVALD: *Causes of the Present Corruption of Christians; in Watson's Theological Tracts*, vol. vi. pp. 297–8.

The manner of teaching religious truths was [in the first century] perfectly simple, and remote from all the rules of the philosophers, and all the precepts of human art. . . . Nor did any apostle, or any one of their immediate disciples, collect and arrange the principal doctrines of Christianity in a scientific or regular system. The circumstances of the times did not require this; and the followers of Christ were more solicitous to exhibit the religion they had embraced, by their tempers and conduct, than to explain its principles scientifically, and arrange them according to the principles of art. There is, indeed, extant a brief summary of Christian doctrines, which is called the Apostles' Creed; and which, from the fourth century onward, was attributed to Christ's ambassadors themselves. But, at this day, all who have any knowledge of antiquity confess unanimously that this opinion is a mistake, and has no foundation. — JOHN L. MOSHEIM: *Ecclesiastical History*, book i. cent. i. part 2, chap. 3, § 3, 4.

The gospel is not a system of theology, nor a *syntagma* of theoretical propositions and conclusions for the enlargement of speculative knowledge, ethical or metaphysical. But it is a history, a series of facts and events related or announced. These do, indeed, involve, or rather I should say they at the same time are, most important doctrinal truths; but still facts and declarations of facts. — S. T. COLERIDGE: *Aids to Reflection; in Works*, vol. i. pp. 234–5.

We might suppose, from such notions of the Christian faith [the notions entertained by modern fanatics], that Christianity was a set of speculative disquisitions, where, if a man agreed only with the barren and useless results, he was left in liberty to follow the devices of his own heart, and to lead what manner of life his fancy or his passions might dictate. It is evangelical, according to these notions, to preach to men of high and exalted mysteries: it is unevangelical to warn men against pride, against anger, against avarice, against fraud, against all the innumerable temptations by which we are hurried away from our duty to our Creator, and from the great care of salvation.... But let any man turn to his gospel, and see if there is a single instance of our blessed Saviour's life where he does not eagerly seize upon every opportunity of inculcating something practical, of bringing some passion under subjection, of promoting the happiness of the world, by teaching his followers to abstain from something hurtful, and to do something useful.... But the moment fanatical men hear any thing plain and practical introduced into religion, they say this is secular, this is worldly, this is moral, this is not of Christ. — SYDNEY SMITH: *Sermons*, vol. i. pp. 98–100.

It was the consummate excellence of Christianity, that it blended in apparently indissoluble union religious and moral perfection. Its essential doctrine was, in its pure theory, inseparable from humane, virtuous, and charitable disposition. Piety to God, as he was impersonated in Christ, worked out, as it seemed, by spontaneous energy into Christian beneficence. But there has always been a strong propensity to disturb this nice balance: the dogmatic part of religion, the province of faith, is constantly endeavoring to set itself apart, and to maintain a separate existence.... The multiplication and subtle refinement of theologic dogmas, the engrossing interest excited by some dominant tenet, especially if they are associated with or embodied in a minute and rigorous ceremonial, tend to satisfy and lull the mind into complacent acquiescence in its own religious completeness. — H. H. MILMAN: *History of Christianity*, book iv. chap. 5.

We should rather point out to objectors, that what *is* revealed is practical, and not speculative; that what the Scriptures are concerned with is not the philosophy of the human mind in itself, nor yet the philosophy of the divine nature in itself, but (that which is properly religion) the relation and connection of the two beings, — what God is to us, what he has done and will do for us, and what we are to be and to do in regard to him. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Sermons on Various Subjects*, p. 136.

Christians . . . are called upon to consider, not so much the doctrines or the duties of Christianity, as they are its design, its great object, its nature, its tendency, its genius. They have disputed long and earnestly on its doctrines; they have hesitated and doubted, and been reluctant to follow the precepts of the New Testament. Let them try now to drink in its spirit. Let them examine what the profession of religion means, not in regard to one or two doctrines, or one or two precepts, but in its inherent spirit, in its true import, in its vitality as a thing that is to come into the soul with spiritual power, waking the dead to life. Christianity is not a set of opinions, nor a system of duties. It is not an orthodox creed, nor a moral law. It is life and light. . . . He who does not catch its spirit knows nothing about it. Now, this spirit is, more than any thing else, diffusive benevolence. . . . It is doing good to all men. It is glad tidings of great joy for all people. Christianity is not designed for one denomination, or one color, or one language. It is all-diffusive, like the air which surrounds us. — B. B. EDWARDS, *as quoted in Bib. Sacra for October*, 1853.

It is nowhere intimated [in the Scriptures] that Christianity is a speculation or a theory, or that any terms of human thought scientifically employed can organize it. Nothing is said of theologic confessions or articles, or of scientific efforts in Christian doctrine. The texts constantly cited in commendation of "sound doctrine," and supposed to be injunctions that maintain the necessity of being grounded in theologic articles, are found, when narrowly inspected, to be only scholastic misapplications or mistranslations, — tokens of the universal imposture regarding this matter of doctrine, that, long ages ago, had gotten possession of the Christian mind. . . . Thus, we have the epithet "*sound*," which occurs many times in application to "words," "speech," "faith," "doctrine," and is understood to commend the study of a rugged, solid, and sturdy system of speculative theology: whereas it only means "wholesome," as it is once translated; that is, health-giving; in the original, *hygeian*. So also the

famous all-text of Paul, a text which seems to have worn itself into the tongues of many teachers, becomes what it is only in the manner above described. It reads in the translation, "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me." In the original, "Hold fast the impression of the health-giving words thou heardest of me," &c.; having no reference at all to any matter of theoretic doctrine, or church article, any more than to the Copernican doctrines of astronomy. The text in Jude, "Contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints," has suffered a similar hardship. Literally and properly translated, the call or exhortation is — "Strive (agonize) for the faith, once for all delivered to the saints." "Contend," a word of churchly pugnacity, is not here. By "the faith," too, is meant no scheme of speculative or theologic doctrine, but the practical doctrine of a godly life, as grounded in the living faith of Christ. The current of the Epistle shows that the errors in view are not errors of opinion, but licentious manners and wicked practices.... Furthermore, it will be seen that the apostles are continually protesting, in one form or another, against exactly that which most resembles a speculative and theoretic activity, — "gnosis" or "knowledge" of one; the "wisdom" of another; "foolish and unlearned questions that do gender strifes;" "oppositions of science, falsely so called;" "vain janglings;" "profane and vain babblings;" the being spoiled "through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ;" "doting about questions and strifes of words." They discourage, in a word, all the attempts of inquisitive and would-be wise men to work out a theory or philosophem of the gospel, by activity in and about their own human centre. Christ, they say, is the doctrine, and the method of reason is faith. "Be not carried about with divers and *strange* doctrines" (i. e. doctrines of mere speculation, that do not minister to godly edifying, and are therefore "strange," i. e. *foreign*, or outside of the Christian truth), "for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace;" implying a conviction, as we see, that it is the heart, and not any platform of articles, that will anchor a soul in stability. And for just this reason, I suppose, the same apostle declares that the grand test of orthodoxy is in what the heart receives, and not in what the head thinks: "Now the end of the commandment," that which includes every thing, "is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." — DR. HORACE BUSHNELL: *Christ in Theology*, pp. 74–7.

SECT. IV. — THE CREEDS AND MYSTERIES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT SIMPLE AND COMPREHENSIBLE.

I am more zealous than ever I was for the reduction of the Christian faith to the primitive simplicity; and more confident that the church will never have peace and concord, till it be so done, as to the test of men's faith and communion.

RICHARD BAXTER.

§ 1. CREEDS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

If we observe the creeds or symbols of belief that are in the New Testament, we shall find them very short. "Lord, I believe that thou art the Son of God, who was to come into the world:" that was Martha's creed. "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God:" that was Peter's creed. "We know and believe that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God:" that was the creed of all the apostles. "This is life eternal, that they know thee, the only true God; and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ:" that was the creed which our blessed Lord himself propounded. And again: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, yea, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in me shall not die for ever:" that was the catechism that Christ made for Martha, and questioned her upon the article, "Believest thou this?" And this belief was the end of the gospel, and in sufficient perfect order to eternal life. For so St. John: "These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through his name." — "For this is the word of faith which we preach, namely, if you with the mouth confess Jesus to be the Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved:" that is the Christian's creed. "For I have resolved to know nothing amongst you but Jesus Christ, and him crucified; that in us ye may learn not to be wise above that which is written, that ye may not be puffed up one for another, one against another:" that was St. Paul's creed, and that which he recommends to the church of Rome, to prevent factions and pride and schism. The same course he takes with the Corinthian church: "I make known unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which ye have received, in which ye stand, and by which ye are saved, if ye hold what I deliver to you," &c. Well, what is that gospel by which they should be saved? It was but this, "that Christ

died for our sins, that he was buried, that he rose again the third day," &c. So that the sum is this: The Gentiles' creed, or the creed in the natural law, is that which St. Paul sets down in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that "God is, and that God is a rewarder." Add to this the Christian creed, that Jesus is the Lord, — that he is the Christ of God, — that he died for our sins, — that he rose again from the dead; and there is no question but he that believes this heartily, and confesses it constantly, and lives accordingly, shall be saved. We cannot be deceived: it is so plainly, so certainly, affirmed in Scripture, that there is no place left for hesitation. . . . Nothing more plain than that the believing in Jesus Christ is that fundamental article upon which every other proposition is but a superstructure, but itself alone with a good life is sufficient to salvation. All other things are advantage or disadvantage, according as they happen; but salvation depends not upon them. . . . In proportion to this "measure of faith," the apostles preached "the doctrine of faith." St. Peter's first sermon was, that "Jesus is Christ, that he was crucified, and rose again from the dead;" and they that believed this were presently baptized. His second sermon was the same; and then also he baptized proselytes into that confession. . . . This was the sum of all that St. Paul preached in the synagogues and assemblies of the people: this he disputed for, this he proved laboriously, — that Jesus is Christ; that he is the Son of God; that he did, that he ought to, suffer, and rise again the third day; and this was all that new doctrine for which the Athenians and other Greeks wondered at him; and he seemed to them to be a setter-forth of strange gods, "because he preached Jesus and the resurrection." This was it into which the jailer and all his house were baptized; this is it which was propounded to him as the only and sufficient means of salvation: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and all thine house." This thing was illustrated sometimes with other glorious things still promoting the faith and honor of Jesus, as that he ascended into heaven, and shall be the Judge of all the world. But this was the whole faith: "The things which concerned the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ," was the large circumference of the Christian faith. That is, such articles which represent God to be our Lord, and Jesus Christ to be his Son, the Saviour of the world; that he died for us, and rose again and was glorified, and reigns over all the world, and shall be our Judge, and in the resurrection shall give us according to our works; that in his name only we shall be saved,

that is, by faith and obedience in him, by the mercies of God revealed to the world in Jesus Christ, — this is all which the Scripture calls necessary; this is that faith alone into which all the church was baptized; which faith, when it was made alive by charity, was and is the faith by which "the just shall live." — JEREMY TAYLOR: *The Rule of Conscience*, book ii. chap. iii. rule xiv. 65, 66; *in Works*, vol. xiii. pp. 155–8.

At the first promulgation of the gospel, all who professed firmly to believe that Jesus was the only Redeemer of mankind, and who promised to lead a holy life conformable to the religion he taught, were received immediately among the disciples of Christ; nor did a more full instruction in the principles of Christianity precede their baptism, but followed after it. — JOHN L. MOSHEIM: *Ecclesiastical History*, book i. cent. i. part 2, chap. 3, § 5.

To me nothing is more evident than that the essence of Christianity, abstractly considered, consists in the system of doctrines and duties revealed by our Lord Jesus Christ; and that the essence of the Christian character consists in the belief of the one, and the obedience of the other. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," says the apostle, "and thou shalt be saved." Again, speaking of Christ, he says, "Being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." The terms rendered sometimes "believing," and sometimes "obeying," are commonly of so extensive signification as to include both senses, and are therefore used interchangeably. — DR. GEO. CAMPBELL: *Ecclesiastical History*, Lect. 4.

No one acquainted with Scripture will hesitate to pronounce, that the belief required in the records of our religion is the belief that "Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world;" "the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." — "That they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," is pronounced to be "eternal life," even in that solemn and affecting address which our Redeemer poured forth to the Father, just before the commencement of his sufferings. Whatsoever controversy may have been stirred about the meaning of these passages, it will, I apprehend, be an extremely difficult task . . . to prove that the fault lies in the ambiguity of the records themselves. — BISHOP MALTBY: *Illustrations of the Truth of the Christian Religion*, pp. 304–5.

It was a creed, and not a history, which, in all the accounts we have in the Acts of the Apostles and elsewhere, formed the subject

of oral teaching. . . . But, resting as the creed did upon the history, containing no doubt in its primitive form a very few simple articles, would it not necessarily awaken curiosity as to the historic facts? — H. H. MILMAN: *History of Christianity*, vol. i. p. 124.

The existence and first development of the Christian church rests on an historical foundation, — on the acknowledgment of the fact that Jesus was the Messiah, — not on a certain system of ideas. Christ did not as a teacher propound a certain number of articles of faith; but, while exhibiting himself as the Redeemer and Sovereign in the kingdom of God, he founded his church on the facts of his life and sufferings, and of his triumph over death by the resurrection. Thus the first development of the church proceeded not from a certain system of ideas set forth in a creed, but only from the acknowledgment of one fact which included in itself all the rest that formed the essence of Christianity, — the acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah, in which were involved the facts by which he was accredited as such by God, and demonstrated to mankind; namely, his resurrection, glorification, and continual agency on earth for the establishment of his kingdom in divine power. — AUGUSTUS NEANDER: *History of the Planting of the Christian Church*, vol. i. p. 20, and vol. ii. p. 64, Bohn's edition.

Without any elaborate written confessions, believers professed their perfect faith in Christ as the Messiah, the Son of God, and the Saviour of men; in the Holy Scriptures as the word of God; in the Holy Spirit as the sanctifier and the spirit of truth; and in the Scripture doctrines of holiness in this life, and of a future state. All this, and much more, was comprehended in faith in Christ. To believe in Christ was to believe in the whole system of Christianity. Nothing more than an explicit profession of faith in Christ appears to have been necessary to admission to the church. Acts viii. 37; xvi. 31–34. The elaborate confessions of faith made use of by most denominations in modern times are a deviation from Christian and apostolic usage. They are meant to be improvements of the institutions of Christ; but they are really corruptions of them. Christ made no such standards, and required no subscriptions to them. Such standards would have materially impeded the progress of religion in the apostolic age, and they have always been injurious. Had an elaborate and extended confession of Christian faith been necessary, such an instrument ought to have been given to the primitive church by its divine Founder. — LEICESTER A. SAWYER: *Organic Christianity*, pp. 28–9.

§ 2. MYSTERIES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The Greek word μυστήριον occurs frequently in the New Testament, and is uniformly rendered, in the English translation, "mystery." We all know that by the most current use of the English word "mystery" is denoted some doctrine to human reason incomprehensible; in other words, such a doctrine as exhibits difficulties, and even apparent contradictions, which we cannot solve or explain. Another use of the word, which is often to be met with in ecclesiastic writers of former ages, and in foreign writers of the present age, is to signify some religious ceremony or rite, especially those now denominated sacraments. When we come to examine the Scriptures critically, and make them serve for their own interpreters, which is the surest way of attaining the true knowledge of them, we shall find, if I mistake not, that both these senses are unsupported by the usage of the inspired penmen. The leading sense of the word is *arcanum*, a secret; any thing not disclosed, not published to the world, though perhaps communicated to a select number. This is totally different from the current sense of the English word "mystery," something incomprehensible. In the former acceptation, a thing was no longer a mystery than whilst it remained unrevealed; in the latter, a thing is equally a mystery after the revelation as before. To the former we apply, properly, the epithet "unknown;" to the latter we may, in a great measure, apply the term "unknowable." Thus the proposition that God would call the Gentiles, and receive them into his church, was as intelligible or comprehensible as that he once had called the descendants of the patriarchs, or as any plain proposition or historical fact. Yet, whilst undiscovered, it remained, in the scriptural idiom, a "mystery," having been hidden from ages and generations; but, after it had pleased God to reveal this his gracious purpose to the apostles by his Spirit, it was a mystery no longer. It is proper to take notice of one passage, wherein the word μυστήριον, it may be plausibly urged, must have the same sense with that which present use gives to the English word "mystery," and denote something, which, though revealed, is inexplicable, and to human faculties unintelligible. The words are, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh," &c., 1 Tim. iii. 16. Admit that some of the great articles enumerated may be justly called mysteries in the ecclesiastical and present acceptation of the term, it does not follow that this is the sense of the term here. The purport

of the sentence plainly is, "Great unquestionably is the divine secret, of which our religion brings the discovery: God was manifest in the flesh," &c. — Abridged from DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL: *The Four Gospels*, Diss. ix. part i. §§ 1, 2, 3, 13.

In support of his explanation of the term "mystery," this able writer refers, among other passages, to 1 Cor. iv. 1, Matt. xiii. 11, and to those in which occur the phrases, "mystery of the gospel," "mystery of the faith," "mystery of God," and "mystery of Christ."

As the expression has, unfortunately, I think, been admitted into our communion service, I am bounden to show you the origin of it. The word "mystery," then, is sometimes used for particular doctrines of the gospel, as was the case also with *sacramentum*: sometimes it is used for the whole collective religion of Christ. In both of these uses, it contains, not any proposition concerning the essence of the Deity, but those moral dispensations which are facts, and which, as such, can be fully comprehended by reason; but which are called mysteries, because they were unknown before the coming of Christ. That Christ was sent by the Father is a fact; that he taught the most holy doctrine is a fact; that he worked miracles is a fact; that he died upon the cross is a fact; that he rose from the grave is a fact; that his religion would be preached to the Gentiles is a fact; and all these facts are so far mysterious as that they could not be known to us without a revelation from God. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Sermons on the Sacrament; in Works*, vol. vi. pp. 147–8.

The Greek *μυστήριον* is commonly rendered "mystery." It answers to the Hebrew מִסְתָּר, and signifies in general *any thing concealed, hidden, unknown*. In the New Testament, it generally signifies *doctrines which are concealed* from men, either because they were never before published (in which sense every unknown doctrine is mysterious), or because they surpass human comprehension. Some doctrines are said to be mysterious for both of these reasons; but more frequently doctrines which are simply *unknown* are called by this name. *Μυστήριον* signifies, therefore, in its biblical use, — (1) Christianity in its whole extent, because it was unknown before its publication; *e. g.* 1 Tim. iii. 9. (2) Particular truths of the Christian revelation; *e. g.* 1 Cor. iv. 1; xv. 51, and especially in the writings of Paul. (3) The doctrine that the divine grace in Christ extends, without distinction, to Gentiles as well as Jews, because this doctrine was so new to the Jews, and so foreign to their feelings; *e. g.* Eph.

i. 9; iii. 3. Col. v. 6, *seq.*, &c. The word "mystery" is now commonly used in *theology* in a more limited sense. Here it signifies a doctrine revealed in the Holy Scriptures, the *mode* of which is inscrutable to the human understanding.... Of this nature are the doctrines respecting Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the union of two natures in Christ; the atonement, &c. — G. C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. vi. 1, 2.

But this excellent writer does not point out any passage of the Bible in which the word "mystery" is applied to the doctrine of three persons in one God, the incarnation of God the Son, or any other incomprehensible tenet in Trinitarian theology.

The apostle [Paul] naturally makes allusion to these [heathen rites], by the use of the word "mystery," to denote those designs of God's providence, and those doctrinal truths, which had been kept concealed from mankind "till the fulness of time" was come, "but were now *made manifest*" to believers.... Our ordinary use of the word "mystery" conveys the notion of something that we cannot understand at all, and which it is fruitless to inquire into.... Such an expression as, "This is a mystery to us," conveys to *us* the idea that it is something we do not and cannot understand: to Paul it would convey the idea, that it is something which "now is made manifest," and which we are therefore called upon to contemplate and study; even as his office was "to *make known* the mystery of the gospel." Not that he meant to imply that we are able fully to understand the divine dispensations; but it is not in reference to this their inscrutable character that he calls them mysteries, but the reverse: they are reckoned by him mysteries, not so far forth as they are hidden and unintelligible, but so far forth as they are revealed and explained. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Essays on Difficulties in Paul's Writings*, pp. 288–9.

The word "mystery" (μυστήριον) means literally something into which one must be *initiated* before it is fully known (from μυέω, *to initiate, to instruct*); and then any thing which is concealed or hidden. We commonly use the word to denote that which is above our comprehension, or unintelligible; but this is never the meaning of the word in the New Testament. It means there some doctrine or fact which has been concealed, or which has not before been fully revealed, or which has been set forth only by figures and symbols. When the doctrine is made known, it may be as clear and plain as any other. — DR. ALBERT BARNES, in his note on Eph. i. 9.

SECT. V. — BELIEF IN UNINTELLIGIBLE MYSTERIES AND METAPHYSICAL CREEDS NOT ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION.

Thank God! man is not to be judged by man. — P. J. Bailey.

If it were considered concerning Athanasius's Creed, how many people understand it not, how contrary to natural reason it seems, how little the Scripture says of those curiosities of explication, and how tradition was not clear on his side for the article itself, . . . it had not been amiss if the final judgment had been left to Jesus Christ. . . . Indeed, to me it seems very hard to put uncharitableness into the creed, and so to make it become as an article of faith. — Jeremy Taylor: *Liberty of Prophesying*, sect. ii. 36; *in Works*, vol. vii. pp. 491–3.

The belief of the Trinity is a practical belief. Far be it from us to think that every plain Christian shall be damned who knoweth not what a person in the Trinity is, as eternally inexistent, when all the divines and school wits as good as confess, after tedious disputes with unintelligible words, that they know not. — Richard Baxter: *Catechizing of Families; in Practical Works*, vol. xix. pp. 63–4.

We believe it to be taught in Scripture, that Jesus is the Son of God, in respect to his divine nature and eternal filiation; but we dare not pronounce belief in this doctrine necessary to eternal salvation. The doctrine is, indeed, involved in so much obscurity and subtlety, that, after having harassed themselves in attempting to understand it, the most learned and talented men have been forced to acknowledge their own ignorance. Now, it is incredible that the Almighty should have caused our everlasting happiness to depend on the reception of a dogma so obscure and perplexed, that in all probability no man can form a distinct conception of it. Many other dogmas are involved in the same obscurity, such as that of the most Holy Trinity, namely, that there is in one numerical essence three distinct persons; one begetting, another begotten, and a third proceeding; — and that of the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, though only one, consists of two complete natures, the divine and the human. It cannot, therefore, be urged that the belief of such doctrines is essential to salvation. — Abridged from Philip Limborch: *Theologia Christiana*, lib. v. cap. 9, §§ 9, 10.

The vulgar sort think that they know Christ enough cut of their creeds and catechisms, and confessions of faith; and if they have but a little acquainted themselves with these, and like parrots conned the words of them, they doubt not but they are sufficiently instructed in all the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Many of the more learned, if they can but wrangle and dispute about Christ [about his Divinity, humanity, union of both together, and what not], imagine themselves to be grown great proficients in the school of Christ. . . . Our Saviour prescribes his disciples another method to come to the right knowledge of divine truths, by doing of God's will. "He that will do my Father's will," saith he, "shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." — DR. RALPH CUDWORTH: *Sermon* 1, *appended to Intellectual System of the Universe*, vol. ii. pp. 549–50.

Everlasting salvation, it is hoped, depends not on a belief in the doctrine of a third person in the Godhead. . . . I do not think that God will condemn him who errs in this matter, particularly if he is an honest and conscientious inquirer. — J. D. MICHAELIS: *Anmerkungen* on John xvi. 13–15.

I insist upon no explication [of the doctrine of the Trinity] at all; no, not even on the best I ever saw; I mean that which is given us in the creed commonly ascribed to Athanasius. I am far from saying, He who does not assent to this "shall without doubt perish everlastingly." . . . I dare not insist upon any one's using the word "Trinity" or "Person." I use them myself without any scruple, because I know of none better; but, if any man has any scruple concerning them, who shall constrain him to use them? I cannot; much less would I burn a man alive, and that with moist, green wood, for saying, "Though I believe the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, yet I scruple using the words Trinity and Persons, because I do not find those terms in the Bible." These are the words which merciful John Calvin cites as wrote by Servetus in a letter to himself. — JOHN WESLEY: *Sermon* 60; *in Works*, vol. ii. p. 21.

Bishop Burnet has said all that can well be said upon them [the damnatory sentences in the Athanasian Creed], but, in my opinion, to very little purpose. Honestly, therefore, did Archbishop TILLOTSON declare to him, "The account given of Athanasius's Creed seems to me in nowise satisfactory. I wish we were well rid of it." — And so do I too, for the credit of our common Christianity. It has been a millstone about the neck of many thousands of worthy men. To be

sure, declarations like these ascended out of the bottomless pit, to disgrace the subscribing clergy, to render ridiculous the doctrines of the gospel, to impel the world into infidelity, and to damn the souls of those who, for the sake of filthy lucre, set their hands to what they do not honestly believe. The truth is, though I do believe the doctrine of the Trinity as revealed in the Scriptures, yet I am not prepared, openly and explicitly, to send to the Devil, under my solemn subscription, every one who cannot embrace the Athanasian illustration of it. In this thing the Lord pardon his servant for subscribing in time past. Assuredly I will do so no more. — DAVID SIMPSON: *Plea for Religion*, p. 404, Appendix ii.

This noble-minded man was prevented by death from putting into effect his resolution of quitting the Established Church of England.

[1] What are the catechisms of the Romish church, of the English church, of the Scotch church, and of all other churches, but a set of propositions which men of different natural capacities, educations, prejudices, have fabricated (sometimes on the anvil of sincerity, oftener on that of ignorance, interest, or hypocrisy) from the divine materials furnished by the Bible? And can any man of an enlarged charity believe, that his salvation will ultimately depend on a concurrence in opinion with any of these niceties, which the several sects of Christians have assumed as essentially necessary for a Christian man's belief? Oh, no! Christianity is not a speculative business. One good act performed from a principle of obedience to the declared will of God will be of more service to every individual than all the speculative theology of St. Augustine. . . . . [2] That man is not to be esteemed an Atheist who acknowledges the existence of a God, the Creator of the universe, though he cannot assent to all the truths of natural religion, which other men may undertake to deduce from that principle; nor is he to be esteemed a Deist who acknowledges that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world, though he cannot assent to all the truths of revealed religion, which other men may think themselves warranted as deducing from thence. Still, you will probably rejoin, there must be many truths in the Christian religion concerning which no one ought to hesitate, inasmuch as without a belief in them he cannot be reputed a Christian. Reputed! By whom? By Jesus Christ, his Lord and his God; or by you? Rash expositors of points of doubtful disputation; intolerant fabricators of metaphysical creeds, and incongruous systems of

theology! Do you undertake to measure the extent of any man's understanding except your own; to estimate the strength and origin of his habits of thinking; to appreciate his merit or demerit in the use of the talent which God has given him; so as unerringly to pronounce that the belief of this or that doctrine is necessary to his salvation? . . . If different men, in carefully and conscientiously examining the Scriptures, should arrive at different conclusions, even on points of the last importance, we trust that God, who alone knows what every man is capable of, will be merciful to him that is in error. We trust that he will pardon the Unitarian, if he be in an error, because he has fallen into it from the dread of becoming an idolater, — of giving that glory to another which he conceives to be due to God alone. If the worshipper of Jesus Christ be in an error, we trust that God will pardon his mistake, because he has fallen into it from a dread of disobeying what he conceives to be revealed concerning the nature of the Son, or commanded concerning the honor to be given him. Both are actuated by the same principle, — the fear of God; and, though that principle impels them into different roads, it is our hope and belief, that, if they add to their faith charity, they will meet in heaven. — BISHOP WATSON.

The passage marked [1] is taken from the Anecdotes of Watson's Life, p. 405; that numbered [2], from the Preface to his Collection of Theological Tracts, vol. i. pp. xv.—xviii.

That a belief in these formulas [those which have been retained since the Nicene Council in the system of the church, established and enforced] should be declared essential to salvation, as is done in the Athanasian Creed, cannot but be disapproved. This creed, however, was not composed by Athanasius; nor was it even ascribed to him before the seventh century, though it was probably composed in the fifth. The principle that any one who holds different views respecting the Trinity *salvus esse non poterit* [cannot be saved] . . . would lead us to exclude from salvation the great majority even of those Christians who receive the doctrine and language of the Council of Nice; for common Christians, after all the efforts of their teachers, will not unfrequently conceive of three Gods in the three persons of the Godhead, and thus entertain an opinion which the creed condemns. But if the many pious believers in common life who entertain this theoretical error may yet be saved, then others who believe in Christ from the heart and obey his precepts, who have a personal experience of the

practical effects of this doctrine, may also be saved, though they may adopt other particular theories and formulas respecting the Trinity, different from that commonly received. These particular formulas and theories, however much they may be regarded and insisted upon, have nothing to do with salvation. — G. C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. xxxiii. 2.

We know that different persons have deduced different and even opposite doctrines from the words of Scripture, and consequently there must be many errors among Christians; but, since the gospel nowhere informs us what degree of error will exclude from eternal happiness, I am ready to acknowledge, that, in my judgment, notwithstanding the authority of former times, our church would have acted more wisely and more consistently with its general principles of mildness and toleration, if it had not adopted the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed. Though I firmly believe that the doctrines themselves of this creed are all founded in Scripture, I cannot but conceive it to be both unnecessary and presumptuous to say, that, "except every one do keep them whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." — BISHOP TOMLINE: *Elements of Christian Theology*, vol. ii. p. 222.

I would willingly admit, that salvation may be obtained without a knowledge of the Athanasian Creed. Thousands and millions of Christians have gone to their graves, who have either never heard of it, or not understood it; and I would add, that let a man believe the Scriptures, let him profess his faith in Christ in the plain and simple language of the New Testament, and he may pass through life as piously and happily, he may go to his grave with as quiet a conscience, and, more than this, he may rise again as freely pardoned and forgiven, as if he had dived into the depths of controversy, and traced the nature of the Deity through the highest walks of metaphysics. But, &c. — DR. EDW. BURTON: *Theological Works*, vol. i. p. 283.

I do not believe the damnatory clauses in the Athanasian Creed, under any qualification given of them, except such as substitute for them propositions of a wholly different character. Those clauses proceed on a false notion, which I have elsewhere noticed, that the importance of all opinions touching God's nature is to be measured by his greatness; and that, therefore, erroneous notions about the Trinity are worse than erroneous notions about church government, or pious frauds, or any other disputed point on which there is a right and a wrong, a true and a false, and on which the wrong and the false

may indeed be highly sinful; but it does not follow that they *must* be; and their sinfulness does not depend upon their wrongness and falsehood, but on other circumstances in the particular mind of the person holding them. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Letter* 185; *in Life and Correspondence*, pp. 321–2.

By such a procedure [as that of persons stigmatizing as heterodox all appeal to private judgment, except that of their own judgment, and that of such as agree with them], uninspired and fallible men arrogate to themselves an authority which belongs only to God, and his inspired messengers; and the creeds, articles, catechisms, and other formularies of a church, or the expositions, deductions, and assertions of an individual theologian, are, practically, put in the place of the Holy Scriptures. . . . To decide who are and who are not partakers of the benefits of the Christian covenant, and to prescribe to one's fellow-mortals, as the terms of salvation, the implicit adoption of our own interpretations, is a most fearful presumption in men not producing miraculous proofs of an immediate divine mission. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Essays on Dangers to Christian Faith*, pp. 238–9.

How was the noble heart of Dante crushed by the thought, that his dear master, and all the men whom he reverenced in the old world, were outcasts for not believing in the Trinity! That thought evidently shook his faith in the Trinity. And it would shake mine, because it would lead me to suppose that truth only became true when Christ appeared, instead of being revealed by him for all ages past and to come; so that whoever walked in the light then, whoever walks in it now, seeking glory and immortality, desirous to be true, has glimpses of it, and will have the fruition of it, which is life eternal. — FREDERICK D. MAURICE: *Note on the Athanasian Creed; in Theological Essays*, p. 369.

We are cheered with a belief, that, in the darkest ages, hundreds and thousands of unlettered men felt an influence which they could not explain, — the influence of love attracting to itself the particles of truth that lay scattered along the symbols and scholastic forms of the church. The great mass of believers have never embraced the metaphysical refinements of creeds, useful as these refinements are; but have singled out, and fastened upon, and held firm, those cardinal truths which the Bible has lifted up and turned over in so many different lights as to make them the more conspicuous by their very alternations of figure and hue. The true history of doctrine is to be studied, not in the technics, but in the spirit, of the church. In un-

numbered cases, the real faith of Christians has been purer than their written statements of it. Men, women, and children have often decided aright when doctors have disagreed, and doctors themselves have often felt aright when they reasoned amiss. . . . Many who now dispute for an erroneous creed have, we trust, a richer belief imbedded in their inmost love. — DR. EDWARDS A. PARK: *Theology of the Intellect, &c.; in Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. vii. p. 560.

If, as admitted in this chapter, the authoritative Teacher of his own religion avoided all metaphysical speculations on the essence of the Deity, and his instructions are so marked for their simplicity and universality as to be easily comprehended by the honest and inquiring, whether illiterate or learned; if the essential truths of revelation are so clearly impressed on the pages of the Bible, and especially of the New Testament, as to be perfectly intelligible to all capacities, and to be recognized in some measure by all members of the Christian church; if Christianity is not a religion of speculative or theoretical propositions, but of vital facts and practical principles; if there are no mysteries in the gospel records, except those which were once hidden from the human mind, but are now revealed and understood; if the faith prescribed by the great Master, avowed by the apostles, and enjoined by them on all converts, was of the briefest and simplest nature, implying merely an acknowledgment of the divine mission of Jesus, and a profession of obedience to his holy laws; and if a belief in the dogma of a Triune God, or in the metaphysical subtleties of creeds, articles, and confessions, is not essential to salvation, — then will it follow that Christianity is not Trinitarianism; unless, indeed, a Trinity in Unity, and a Unity in Trinity, were a doctrine so plain as to be comprehensible by the common understanding, and so practical as to be capable of ameliorating the heart and the life; forming, moreover, one of the great subjects of the instructions of Jesus, and the preaching of the apostles. Then will it also follow, that the mysterious dogmas of so-called Orthodoxy, even though they could be elaborately inferred from a combination of passages drawn out of their connection, are not of that importance which they are represented to be in the established or popular formularies of faith.

The qualifications here made, however, will be found unnecessary; for in the following chapter, and in other portions of this work, we shall, with the aid of eminent writers belonging to orthodox churches, prove that the dogma of a Triune God is, in one form or another, either obscure, unintelligible, absurd, or self-contradictory; and that it derives no support either from the express declarations of Jesus Christ, of prophets, evangelists, and apostles, or from any rational mode of inference employed in the collecting arranging, and comparing of texts.

CHAPTER V.

TRINITARIANISM EITHER UNINTELLIGIBLE OR SELF-CONTRADICTORY.

SECT. I. — VARIOUS AND OPPOSITE STATEMENTS OR DEFINITIONS OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

> When men have several faiths, to find the true,
> We only can the aid of reason use.
>
> SIR W. DAVENANT

In pages 2 and 3, we gave a brief abstract of the principal theories of a Triune God which have been set forth in the writings of eminent theologians. In the present section, it will be our aim to exhibit these theories in the words of their respective authors, or of those to whom they have been attributed.

We shall, in the first place, present the formulas of two of the most ancient ecclesiastic symbols, — the Apostolical, so called, and the Nicene; each of these containing a profession of faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; namely, in a kind of Trinity, but not in a Triune God; — the first and oldest of these creeds being, in its statement of the Deity, Unitarian; and the second, Dualistic. We shall then quote a variety of propositions emanating from very different sources, but all acknowledging belief in the dogma of a Trinity in Unity; and shall endeavor to show that these propositions are either so obscure and unintelligible as to express no ideas, and afford no ground whatever for belief, or that they contain such affirmations and such principles of reasoning as lead to conclusions very different from that which they are intended to recommend; that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so far from their subsisting as three co-equal and co-eternal persons in one God, according to the usual representation of the Trinitarian doctrine, are, by virtue of the statements, the admissions, or the reasonings of Trinitarians themselves, either — I. Only one divine person or agent with three names; II. Three finite intelligences, — each, considered in himself, imperfect, but all constituting one God; III. Three unequal beings, of whom only one is the absolutely True, the Self-existent, the Supreme God; or, IV. Three co-equal, co-eternal, and infinite Gods.

It is painful to argue on this subject; but, if men will depart from the sublime simplicity of Scripture and from the teachings of enlightened reason, it seems almost impossible to point out the conclusions fairly deducible from their phraseology, without using such expressions as, though meant to apply only to the figments of the human brain, jar on those sentiments of profound reverence which every devout mind must feel in speaking of the Most High.

All Trinitarians say, reluctantly or unreluctantly, that "there are three *persons* in one God." In using this word "person," they, of course, annex, or they do *not* annex, to it certain ideas. They use the word either in its ordinary acceptation, or in some other sense, or in no sense at all. Some Trinitarians have no hesitation in defining the conceptions which they attach to it; while others content themselves with the remark, that it expresses a *distinction* in the Godhead which is so mysterious as to be incapable of being defined or explained. In the latter case, the proposition, of which the word "person" forms the chief element, is, as a matter of course, unintelligible. It means nothing. It consists of letters or sounds which have no signification. It addresses no faculty of the mind, touches no affection of the heart, calls into action no aspiration of the soul, — no principle of faith or hope or love.

In the other cases, in which "person" is defined, the proposition under notice expresses a sentiment which can be pronounced congruous or incongruous with itself, true or false, according to the ideas which it is made to represent, and to its agreement or disagreement with the principles of reason and the statements of revelation.

I. If, in the proposition, "There are three persons in one God," by the word "person" is meant a character, phase, or relation of the Deity; a peculiar mode in which God discloses himself to his intelligent offspring; a manifestation of some one of his characteristics or attributes, — then will the doctrine, that the three persons, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, are one God, be perfectly intelligible, and consistent with itself; for the one Supreme Being unquestionably acts towards man in the three capacities of a creating, a redeeming, and a sanctifying God. But this theory of a Trinity in Unity, which has been suggested in a variety of forms, though all essentially alike, is liable to strong objections. It departs from the ordinary sense of the word "person," without assigning a satisfactory reason. It restricts the relations of the Deity to three, when, in point of fact, they exceed that number: for God is not only our Creator, but our Governor; not only our Redeemer, but our Preserver; not only our Sanctifier, but our Consoler and our Judge; so that there would be at least as much propriety in saying that there are six or more persons, as in maintaining that there are only three, in the Godhead. Moreover, the terms "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," the original subject of the proposition (not the substituted words "Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier"), when spoken of as mere characters or relations of the Deity, and not as intelligent agents, convey no ideas which can be apprehended by the human mind. The Father, the Son, or

the Spirit of a relation or a mode; their co-equality and co-essentiality; the self-existence or the supremacy of the first relation, the eternal generation of the second and procession of the third relation, — each of these being God, and yet constituting altogether only one God; the one mode or manifestation sending the others, or appointing them to certain trusts, and all having communications one with another in the great acts of creation, providence, and redemption, — these or similar representations of God, which may justly be inferred from the language used by believers in a nominal Trinity, — if consistent with their main principle, and not meaning to speak of three real, conscious agents or beings, — are so repugnant to the dictates of common sense and of universal language as to justify any reasonable man in refusing to believe a doctrine which involves such absurdities.

II. and III. If, on the contrary, it is affirmed that the word "person" should be understood to denote an intelligent agent, but that, though three intelligent agents exist in the Godhead, and each of these is God, they are not three Gods, but only one God, — it will necessarily follow, — unless, in spite of the denial, we understand the proposition to convey the incompatible notion that three infinite Gods are only one infinite God, — that the word "God" is used here in two very different senses; and that the proposition means either, 1. That each of the three persons or agents is not by himself an infinite being, but is called God in a lower sense of the term, and that the Supreme and Self-existent One is neither the Father nor the Son nor the Holy Ghost, but the true God compounded of the three persons or agents; in other words, that, taken individually, neither of them is the true God, but that, collectively, the three constitute the true God; the three highest but finite beings, from whom all existence is derived, making altogether one Infinite Being. Or, 2. That only the first of the intelligent agents in the Trinity is God, agreeably to the strictest sense of that word; that he only is a self-existent and independent being, — the second and the third, derived and dependent; but that these belong to the Godhead, because they were superior to all other finite beings, and had, by the will of the Father, and in a peculiar and ineffable manner, partaken of all his attributes, with the single exception of self-existence. According to the first of these alternatives, a manifest contradiction is involved in the terms of the proposition; according to the second, the three persons are not equal to each other. Strange that a doctrine leading to such conclusions should have been avowedly held by a majority of Trinitarian writers!

IV. If, agreeably to another phasis of the doctrine of the Trinity, the word "person" is explained to mean an eternal, infinite agent, mind, spirit, or being, and it is asserted that there are three such intelligent existences in the Godhead, equal to each other in all divine perfections, the result will be, unless the words have a meaning directly adverse to what we usually attribute to them, that there are three infinite Gods; and that, by saying there is only one God, we either contradict ourselves, or intend merely to affirm that the three Gods harmonize so completely in their wills and modes of operation, that they are in effect but one essentially Divine Being, — one God.

We have not attempted to trace a tithe of the consequences resulting from the various explanations of the word "person," as used by its supporters in stating the doctrine of a Triune God; nor have we, in all cases, employed the phraseology which they adopt. The copious statements of the Trinity, however, from orthodox authorities, with some of the objections made to them by other professed Trinitarians, which are now to be presented, will, we think, justify what has been already said, and, in a great measure, supply what has been omitted.

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§ 1. The Apostolic or Unitarian Trinity.

I believe in God, the Father, Almighty; and in Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, buried, arose from the dead on the third day, ascended to the heavens, and sits at the right hand of the Father, whence he will come to judge the living and the dead; and in the Holy Spirit, the holy church, the remission of sins, and the resurrection of the body. — The Apostles' Creed (*so called*).

The "Apostles' Creed" we have given as it appears in a note to Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History (vol. i. p. 80), translated by Dr. Murdock, who says that this was "the common form of it in the fourth century, as used in most churches in Europe, Asia, and Africa, except some slight verbal discrepancies." It was once the prevailing opinion, that this creed was actually the production of the apostles; but, though it was undoubtedly in use at a very early age of the church, the evidence for its genuineness as an apostolic composition seems not to be valid. It is, however, with the exception of the creeds of the New Testament, the simplest of all existing forms (see pp. 243–6 of the present work); and it is remarkable that it says nothing whatever of a Trinity in Unity, of the Deity of Christ, or of the separate personality of the Holy Spirit. It is strictly and thoroughly Unitarian: "I believe in God, the Father, Almighty; and in Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son, . . . ; and in the Holy Spirit."

REMARKS.

As for the parts thereof [of the Apostles' Creed] which were undoubtedly most ancient, the matter of them is so manifestly contained in the Scripture, and, supposing the truth of Christianity itself, they are so certain, that they need no other authority to support them than what Christianity itself subsists upon; and, for other points afterwards added, they cannot, by virtue of being inserted there, pretend to apostolic authority. — Dr. Isaac Barrow: *Exposition of the Creed; in Works*, p. 572.

That the unity of the Godhead is concluded in this article is apparent, not only because the Nicene Council so expressed it by way of exposition, but also because this creed in the churches of the East, before the Council of Nice, had that addition in it, "I believe in *one* God." — BISHOP PEARSON: *Exposition of the Creed*, Art. I. p. 32.

It will be convenient to take notice of the observation of Rufinus, "that, in all the Eastern creeds, it is, 'I believe in *one* God, the Father;'" where, if by the Eastern he means the Nicene or Constantinopolitan, it is certainly true; or, if he means the ancient creeds used before either of those, it is true not only of the Eastern, but of the Western also; for in all the most primitive creeds, whether Latin or Greek, this article runs, "I believe in one God," or "in the only God;" as in the two creeds of Irenæus, and three of Origen's, *ἕνα θεὸν*, *one God;* and in three of Tertullian's, *unum* or *unicum Deum*, one or the only God. — SIR PETER KING: *History of the Apostles' Creed*, page 50.

From the Apostles' Creed it may be possible to deduce the catholic doctrine of the Trinity; but assuredly it is not fully expressed therein. . . . It has, as it appears to me, indirectly favored Arianism and Socinianism. — S. T. COLERIDGE: *Literary Remains; in Works*, vol. v. pp. 229, 421.

A Trinity, such as is acknowledged by Christian Unitarians, may be easily deduced from this creed; but how it can be possible to deduce from it Trinitarianism, or a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, is to us as inconceivable as it would be to infer this dogma from the simple declaration of the Apostle Peter, that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy spirit and with power."

I believe that the Apostles' Creed may be taken as a specimen of truths held by the general consent of Christians; for every thing there (except the descent into hell, which was a later insertion) is in almost the very words of Scripture. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Letter* 156; *in Life and Correspondence*, p. 298.

The Apostles' Creed . . . is a most valuable monument of the church, because it shows what in the early ages were considered as the great, the peculiar, and the essential doctrines of the gospel, viz., those all-important facts which are summarily recounted in this creed. — DR. MURDOCK, *in his Translation of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i. pp. 79, 80, note.

If we examine the history of these first ages, we find them speaking, in the utmost simplicity, of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;

but having still, confessedly, no speculative theory or dogmatic scheme of Trinity. . . . They had the word of God in power, but not as yet in science: Christian dogmatics were yet to be invented. If you desire to see the form in which they summed up the Christian truth, you have it in what is called the Apostles' Creed. This beautiful compend was gradually prepared or accumulated in the age prior to theology; most of it, probably, in the time of the Apostolic Fathers. It is purely historic, — a simple compendium of Christian fact, without a trace of what we sometimes call doctrine; that is, nothing is drawn out into speculative propositions, or propounded as a dogma, in terms of science. — DR. HORACE BUSHNELL: *God in Christ*, pp. 286–7.

Let any one place the Apostles' Creed beside that of the Westminster Assembly, and see what a vast expansion of revealed truth has taken place. The former was all that the mind of the church, in that age of infancy, was able to eliminate and systematize out of the Scriptures; and this simple statement was sufficient to satisfy the imperfectly developed scientific wants of the early church. The latter creed was what the mind of the church was able to construct out of the elements of the very same written revelation, after fifteen hundred years of study and reflection upon them. The "words," the doctrinal elements, of Scripture are "spirit and life," and hence, like all spirit and all life, are capable of expansion. Upon them, the historic Christian mind, age after age, has expended its best reflection; and now the result is an enlarged and systematized statement such as the early church could not have made, and did not need. — PROFESSOR W. G. T. SHEDD, *in the Bibliotheca Sacra for April*, 1854; vol. xi. pp. 384–5.

From this quotation it would seem, that, the nearer we approach the time of the apostles, the less Trinitarianism is found in the Christian church; and that, the further we recede from it, the more dogmatic, orthodox, and metaphysical the doctrine becomes. The mind of the early Christians was too simple and unsophisticated to discern in the Scriptures the doctrine of a Triune God; and it was only by degrees, after centuries of reflection had been employed in systematizing the Bible, that men and women could eliminate the mystery of a divine plurality from the words of Moses and Christ, "Jehovah, our God, is one Jehovah;" and a Trinity of eternal persons from the writings of those who constantly inculcated the great truths that there is but one God, the Father; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son and Servant of God, — the Man of Nazareth, who was raised up, commissioned, approved, and anointed by the Father to act as the Teacher and Regenerator of the human race.

§ 2. THE ORIGINAL NICENE TRINITY.

We believe in one God, the Father, Almighty, the Maker of all things visible and invisible: and in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only-begotten (that is) of the substance of the Father; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; of the same substance with the Father; by whom all things were made that are in heaven and that are in earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, descended, and was incarnate, and became man; suffered, and rose again the third day; ascended into the heavens; and will come to judge the living and the dead: and in the Holy Spirit. But those who say that there was a time when he was not, and that he was not before he was begotten, and that he was made out of nothing, or affirm that he is of any other substance or essence, or that the Son of God is created, and mutable or changeable, the catholic church doth pronounce accursed. — NICENE CREED, *as given by Dr. Murdock in his Translation of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i. p. 293, note.

Dr. MURDOCK says that "the creed used in the Catholic, Lutheran, and English churches, and called the Nicene Creed, is in reality the creed set forth by the Council of Constantinople in the year 381," and "is considerably more full than the original Nicene Creed."

This creed, which was established at the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, somewhat approximates to the orthodox belief now professed; but it makes no mention of the co-equality of the Son with the Father, the personality or Divinity of the Holy Ghost, or a Trinity in Unity. Like the "Apostles' Creed," it is Unitarian in making a profession of faith in one God, the Father, and in the derived existence of his Son Jesus Christ; but it so far departs from this doctrine as to introduce an article of belief in another Deity, — the uncreated Deity of Christ. In other words, it propounds, as we conceive, a Duality of Gods, — one of the Gods being derived from the other; and ends by pronouncing a curse against those who cannot help thinking and asserting that this portion of the creed is neither apostolical nor rational.

REMARKS.

This, I say, our Christian Platonist supposes to be much more wonderful, that this so great and abstruse a mystery, of three eternal hypostases in the Deity, should thus by pagan philosophers, so long before Christianity, have been asserted as the principle and original of the whole world; it being more indeed than was acknowledged by the Nicene fathers themselves; they then not so much as determining

There is evidently some subordination amongst these three persons; because the Father possesses the divine nature from himself, but the Son and Holy Spirit have it from the Father, who is therefore the Fountain and Origin of their Divinity. . . . In dignity and power the Father is supereminent in respect to the Son, and the Father and Son in respect to the Holy Spirit; since it is more honorable to beget than to be begotten, to cause to proceed than to proceed. The sender has also power over the person sent; but the messenger, not over him by whom he is commissioned. But God the Father is everywhere said to have sent the Son; and the Son refers all things that he does to his Father as the author: see John vi. 57; v. 19, 20, 30. The Scripture, accordingly, terms the Father sometimes "God" in an absolute sense, John iii. 16. Rom. viii. 31, 32. Gal. iv. 4. 1 John iv. 9, 10, *et al.*; and sometimes "the God of Jesus Christ," John xx. 17. Heb. i. 9; and the Son himself plainly says that the Father is greater than he, John xiv. 28. — PHILIP LIMBORCH: *Theologia Christiana*, lib. ii. cap. 17, § 25.

Though all created beings are the creatures of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the catholic faith requires us to own the Father as the Source and Head in the work of creation, and the two other persons as acting in and executing the same work, but in harmonious subordination to him as the Head and Centre of Divinity. . . . Of these persons, only one can be self-existent and unoriginated, the Cause and Original of all things, who is denominated God the Father: but the Father alone is self-existent and unoriginated; therefore the Son must have derived his being and essence from the Father. . . . . The doctrine here delivered accords with the sentiments of the most learned and zealous defenders of the orthodox faith in every age. — GEORGE HOLDEN: *Scripture Testimonies*, pp. 336, 437, 444.

REMARKS.

Whoever asserts that the Son owes his essence to the Father, denies him to be self-existent. . . . If we admit the whole essence to be solely in the Father, either it will be divisible, or it will be taken away from the Son; and so, being despoiled of his essence, he will be only a titular God. The divine essence, according to these triflers, belongs solely to the Father, inasmuch as he alone possesses it, and is the author of the essence of the Son. Thus the Divinity of the Son will be a kind of emanation from the essence of God, or a derivation of a part from the whole. . . . Although we confess, in point of order

and degree, that the Father is the Fountain of the Deity, yet we pronounce it a detestable figment that the essence belongs exclusively to the Father, as though he were the author of the Deity of the Son; because, on this supposition, either the essence would be divided, or Christ would be only a titular and imaginary God. If they admit that the Son is God, but inferior to the Father, then in him the essence must be begotten and created, which in the Father is unbegotten and uncreated. — JOHN CALVIN: *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, book i. chap. xiii. 23, 24.

If we are not to condemn and damn the ancients for embracing an opinion which supposes three distinct substances, and, by consequence, three Gods, — though this name be given the Father in a more exalted sense, and hereby the unity of the Supreme Being secured, — neither ought we to condemn the present Christian world for owning only one individual substance in the persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. . . . If it is thought hard to accuse the ancients as being Tritheists, neither ought we to term the present Christians, Sabellians or Socinians. — LE CLERC: *Abstract of Dr. Clarke's Polemical Writings*, p. 127.

In this paragraph, LE CLERC is speaking of the opinions that were held by those called orthodox who lived at or near the time of the assembling of the Nicene Council.

We find that all the fathers before, at, and after the Council of Nice, who harmonize with the sentiments there avowed, do with one consent declare the Father only to be *αὐτόθεος*, or self-existent God. The Greek ones speak of the Father as the cause of the being of the Son: the ancient Latin theologians name the Father *auctor*, *radix*, *fons*, *caput* [author, root, fountain, head], in respect to the Son. The Greek fathers again ascribe to him *ὑπεροχήν* [pre-eminence]: they speak of him as *μείζων* [superior], but of the Son as *δεύτερος θεός* [an inferior God]. The Father they style "without beginning;" and they speak of the Son as springing from him. It lies, moreover, on the very face of the Nicene Creed, that it acknowledges the Father only as the *Μονὰς* of the Godhead: "We believe in ONE GOD, *the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible;* and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten of the Father," &c. Jesus Christ, as here presented to us, is not the *one God*, but the *one Lord* who was begotten of the substance of the one God or the Father, &c. The Father, then, as presented in this creed,

is not merely a distinct person, *i.e.* not merely one of the three persons, and on an equality with the other two; but he is the original, independent, self-existent Μονὰς or Unity, who constitutes the *Fons et Principium* of all true Godhead. — Abridged from MOSES STUART, *in Biblical Repository for April*, 1835; vol. v. pp. 282–3.

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§ 5. THE ATHANASIAN TRINITY; OR, THE TRINITY OF CO-EQUAL PERSONS.

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith; which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost; the Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate; the Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible; the Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet there are not three eternals, but one eternal: as also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated; but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty; and yet they are not three Almighties, but one Almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet they are not three Gods, but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord; and yet not three Lords, but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every person by himself to be God and Lord; so are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say there be three Gods or three Lords. The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son; neither made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another; but the

whole three persons are co-eternal together, and co-equal. So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity. Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right faith is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man: God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and man, of the substance of his mother, born in the world: perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting; equal to the Father as touching his Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching his manhood. Who although he be God and man, yet he is not two, but one Christ; one, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God; one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ. Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead. He ascended into heaven; he sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty; from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. At whose coming, all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give account for their own works; and they that have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire. This is the catholic faith; which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved. — THE ATHANASIAN CREED (*so called*).

This creed, which is generally acknowledged not to have been written by Athanasius, we have quoted from the "Book of Common Prayer," as used by the Church of England. According to Professor STUART (Miscellanies, p. 70), "it was received in France about A.D. 850; in Spain and Germany, about 1030. In some parts of Italy it was current about 960; at Rome it was admitted in 1014."

The "Athanasian Creed" is obviously more antagonistic to Unitarianism than those formed at the Councils of Nice and Constantinople; for it exhibits in a very prominent manner the co-equality of three persons in the Godhead. But, as the unhallowed temerity and uncharitable zeal of its author led him to enter ground on which the sacred writers never dared to tread, and to explain, with minute particularity, mysteries quite unknown to prophet or apostle, — he naturally lays down propositions which are repugnant to each other, and ascribes to the divine persons modes of existence which evidently imply the inferiority of the Son and the Spirit to the Father. The consequences resulting from the adverse properties of equality and dependence will be exhibited in several of the following extracts

REMARKS.

[1] It must be considered as a serious defect in a creed, if, excluding subordination, without mentioning any particular form, it gives no hint of any other form in which it admits it. The only *minus* admitted by the Athanasian Creed is the inferiority of Christ's humanity to the Divinity generally; but both Scripture and the Nicene Creed teach a subordination of the Son to the Father, independent of the incarnation of the Son. Now, this is not inserted; and therefore the denial in the assertion, "None is greater or less than another," is universal, and a plain contradiction of Christ speaking of himself as the co-eternal Son, "My Father is greater than I." — Of the unauthorized creed of the fierce individual, whom from ignorance of his real name we may call Pseudo-Athanasius, I agree with many learned and orthodox fathers of the English church in wishing that "we were well rid." . . . . . [2] The Athanasian Creed is, in my judgment, heretical in the omission or implicit denial of the Filial subordination in the Godhead, which is the doctrine of the Nicene Creed, and for which Bull and Waterland have so fervently and triumphantly contended; and by not holding to which, Sherlock staggered to and fro between Tritheism and Sabellianism. — S. T. COLERIDGE.

The first of these quotations is taken from COLERIDGE'S "Literary Remains" (Works, vol. v. pp. 385, 586); the second, from his "Table Talk" (Works, vol. vi. p. 290). If we do not misapprehend the writer, the Athanasian Creed is heretical because it labors to establish the perfect equality of the persons in the Godhead, and thus favors the doctrine of three Gods. The quotations that follow are of a different character, and look at this creed from another point of view.

Let us examine the fundamental points in the representations of the Athanasian Symbol. The Father and the Son are said to be distinguished by the fact that the Father is eternally unbegotten; the Son is from all eternity begotten, but never begets. Now, one may represent eternal generation to be as remote as possible from all temporary and organic generation, yet there remains one idea, after all, which never can be removed from this view of the subject; and this is, that the relation of dependence is of necessity conveyed by such modes of expression. Now, if the Father has from eternity exerted his power to beget the Son, and the Son has never exerted a power to beget any person of the Godhead (which of itself seems to make a great dissimilarity between the first and second persons of the

Godhead); and, moreover, if there is no relation of dependence between the Son and another person of the Godhead, which can serve as an equivalent for the relation of dependence that exists between the Father and Son, — then does it seem plainly to follow, that the power of the Father is greater than that of the Son, and the glory which the Father has in respect to the Son must be greater than the glory which the Son has in respect to the Father. The same must be true also in respect to the Spirit; and this, whether we assume, with the Greek church, that he proceeds from the Father only; or, with the Latin one, that he proceeds both from the Father and the Son. In the last case, the Son is supposed to have only *one* incapacity, compared with the Father [viz., that of *not begetting*]; in the former [*i.e.* where the Spirit is said to proceed from the Father only], he has a double incapacity [viz., that of not begetting, and that of not causing the procession of the Spirit], in case nothing proceeds from him, and he begets nothing. At all events, the Spirit must be supposed to have this twofold incapacity [for he neither begets, nor causes procession]; and he is moreover in a relation of dependence; for the proceeding from, or the being breathed forth, necessarily implies a relation of dependence, as well as the being begotten. It is, moreover, a dependence different from that which belongs to the first and second persons of the Godhead; although no one, indeed, can tell what it is in itself, or how it differs from the being begotten. — SCHLEIERMACHER, *as translated by Stuart, in Biblical Repository for April*, 1835; vol. v. pp. 270–1.

Many have supposed, that the Son, the second person in the Trinity, is, in some mysterious manner, begotten of the Father; and the Holy Ghost, the third person in the Trinity, is, in the same mysterious manner, eternally proceeding from the Father and Son both. . . . But . . . to suppose that the Son, with respect to his divine nature, was begotten of the Father, and that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the concurrence of the Father and Son, is to suppose that a Trinity of persons is not founded in the divine nature, but merely in the divine will. For, on this supposition, if the Father had not pleased to beget the Son, and the Father and Son had not pleased to produce the Holy Ghost, there could have been no Trinity of persons in the Godhead. Besides, this opinion sets the Son as far below the Father as a creature is below the Creator, and sets the Holy Ghost as far below the Son as he is below the Father, or rather it makes the Holy Ghost a creature of a creature! There are no ideas which we can affix to

the words "beget," "produce," or "proceed," but must involve in them an infinite inequality between the three sacred persons in the adorable Trinity. On this ground, we feel constrained to reject the eternal generation of the Son, and the eternal procession of the Holy Ghost, as such mysteries as cannot be distinguished from real absurdities, and as such doctrines as strike at the foundation of the true doctrine of three equally divine persons in one God. — DR. NATHANAEL EMMONS: *Works*, vol. iv. p. 114.

Who will venture to say, that any of the definitions heretofore given of personality in the Godhead in itself considered — I mean such definitions as have their basis in the Nicene or Athanasian Creed — are intelligible and satisfactory to the mind? At least, I can truly say that I have not been able to find them, if they do in fact exist; nor, so far as I know, has any one been able, by any commentary on them, to render them clear and satisfactory.... If I say in words, that Christ and the Spirit are God, and very God; and say this ever so strongly and ever so often; and yet assign to them attributes or a condition which after all makes them dependent, and represents them as derived and originated, — then I am in fact no real believer in the doctrine of true equality among the persons of the Godhead; or else I use expressions out of their lawful and accustomed sense, and lose myself amid the sound of words, while *things* are not examined and defined with scrupulous care and accuracy.... In whatever shape we present the idea of derivation, — whether we call it by the name of "generation," "procession," "emanation," or by any other like appellation, — still the idea remains of dependence. A derived God, if words are allowed to have their appropriate meaning, cannot be a self-existent God; a dependent God cannot be an independent one. We may assert what we please respecting the indescribable, unspeakable, wonderful manner of generation or procession; we may disclaim all similitudes among created things ever so much or so strongly; yet all this goes only to the manner, and not to the matter, of the thing. The latter still remains. The idea of dependence and derivation is inseparably, and by absolute necessity, connected with the idea of generation and procession. — MOSES STUART, *in Biblical Repository for April*, 1835; vol. v. pp. 277–8, 281–2.

Another passage, equally strong and well reasoned, by the same writer, against the eternal generation of Christ, may be seen in Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. vii. pp. 313–15. His Excursus I. on Rom. i. 4 contains also some excellent remarks on this subject.

§ 6. The Westminster Trinity.

In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost, eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. — Westminster Confession of Faith, II. 3.

The Westminster Trinity, the Trinity of the Church of Scotland, seems to be a lineal descendant of the Athanasian, and to possess its great feature of inconsistency and contradiction in representing three Gods to be only one; unless by "the unity of the Godhead" is understood merely harmony of counsel subsisting between the three divine persons, — between the underived Father, and the two Gods who are spoken of as receiving from him their existence. The grounds, however, of objection made to the Scotch Confession, in the following passage, are somewhat different from those commonly adduced against the propositions laid down in the creed attributed to Athanasius.

REMARKS.

"One substance:" Where is the authority for such an expression? What is the meaning of it? What can we understand by the substance of God? It has been explained by the word "being." That, certainly, is not the meaning in which it was understood by the compilers of the Confession. In their mind, it referred to some supposed substratum, or foundation, for qualities; some philosophical, metaphysical speculation, distinguishing the qualities of a being from the being itself; which is totally unknown to the word of God. "Eternally begotten — eternally proceeding:" Here is a distinction made between the mode of the Son's existence, and the mode of the Spirit's existence. The Son is represented as eternally begotten or generated by the Father. This is a totally different doctrine from that of Christ's having been the Son of God from eternity. The doctrine here taught is, that the continued mode of existence of his divine nature is being eternally begotten or generated by the Father; and this mode of existence is distinguished from the Spirit's mode of existence, which is represented as an eternal procession from the Father and the Son. Now, what authority is there for such a distinction in the word of God? Where is there any thing approaching the expression, "eternally being. begotten"? The Confession refers to John i. 14, 18, for the eternal begetting of the Son, and to John xv. 26 for the eternal procession of the Holy Ghost; but neither of these passages have

one syllable in them bearing upon such a subject. The former says that the Son is the only-begotten of the Father, but nothing of an eternal prolonged begetting. The latter says that Jesus will send the Spirit from the Father, and that the Spirit proceedeth from the Father. But this manifestly refers to his coming to Christ's people, and not to the mode of his eternal existence. If it referred to the mode of his existence, it would seem to intimate rather that he proceedeth from the Father only, and not from the Son, according to the doctrine of the Greek church. But Scripture appears to me to be entirely silent on the subject. — JAMES CARLILE: *The Use and Abuse of Creeds and Confessions*, pp. 60–1.

REMARKS ON THE ANCIENT AND MODERN THEORIES OF ETERNAL GENERATION AND PROCESSION.

According to them [the modified views and more cautious statements of modern theologians], the Father is the author of only the subsistence, *i.e.* the *modus existendi* or personality of the Son and Spirit; while the substance or essence of the Godhead is numerically one and the same in all the three persons. But here, too, a difficulty arises of somewhat formidable magnitude. It is this: Father and Son and Spirit are conceded to be numerically one and the same in essence or substance. Yet, if we are to credit the views now before us, we must at least believe that the Father is the origin or author of the *modus existendi* of the Son and Spirit. The whole reduces itself, then, simply to this, viz., that, while the substance of the Son and Spirit is self-existent and independent, and the same with that of the Father, it has still no *modus existendi* but that which the Father gives it. But how, we may be allowed to ask, could the substance of the Son and Spirit be self-existent and independent, and yet be supposed to exist without any *modus existendi* necessarily attached to it? And if that modus cannot by any possibility be even imagined to be disconnected from the existence of the substance itself, and cannot possibly have ever been as it were in abeyance and waiting to be determined, how could that modus spring from the Father, and not come from, or be necessarily connected with, self-existent substance itself? Or, to put the matter in another light, how is it that the Father, being one and the same substance numerically with the Son and Spirit, could have the attribute of ἀγεννησία [unbegottenness], while the Son and Spirit have it not? Do not attributes, at least according to the usual methods of thinking and reasoning, arise from the nature

and essence of substances? And if the Son and Spirit possess the same substance in all respects (which must be true if the substance of the Godhead is numerically one), then how can it be shown that the second and third persons are dependent for the mode of their existence on the first? The same causes produce the same effects. If the very same substance belongs to the Father which belongs to the Son and Spirit, and, as possessing this, the Father has *ἀγεννησία*, how can it be shown that the attributes attached to this substance must not in each case be the same? . . . To be the author of the proper substance of the Godhead of Son and Spirit, according to the patristical creed; or to be the author of the ***modus existendi*** of the Son and Spirit, according to the modern creed, — both seem to involve the idea of a power and glory in the Father immeasurably above that of the Son and Spirit. — MOSES STUART, ***in Biblical Repository for April***, 1835; vol. v. pp. 303–4.

Between the fathers and the modern Trinitarians we mark this difference of opinion: The fathers held the communication ***of the substance*** (*τῆς οὐσίας*) of the Father to the Son; while the modern formula represents the Father as begetting only the ***personality*** (*ὑπόστασις*) of the Son, and the Father and Son begetting only the ***personality*** (*ὑπόστασις*) of the Spirit. All these formulæ, however, make this radical distinction between the Father and the Son; namely, that the Father is ***unbegotten***, and that the Son is ***begotten***. . . . This symbol, "eternal generation," has been handed down through every succeeding age. . . . But how can they [these statements] consist with the absolute equality of the persons in the Godhead? This we freely confess we do not see, nor have we ever been able to comprehend. The representation is, that the Father is unbegotten, but begets; the Son is begotten, but never begets. Here a capacity — that of ***begetting*** — is predicated of the Father, which is not predicable of the Son. How, then, can the Son in every respect be equal with the Father? and how can one be begotten without dependence, in that respect, upon him that begets? Is the ***essence*** of the superhuman in Christ begotten by the Father? Then is the Son dependent for that essence upon his Father, and the Father has this one prerogative above the Son. Or is the ***personality*** only of the Son — according to the refinements of modern scholastics — begotten by the Father? Then — leaving out of the question the difficulty of apprehending how a personality independent of essence can be begotten — is the Son dependent for his personality upon the Father; so that very little

is gained. Nor is the difficulty removed by *eternal generation*. This may remove an incidental difficulty as to time; but the fact of generation, and the consequences deducible from it, remain. Now, self-existence and independence are essential elements of Divinity; but derivation, whether by generation, procession, or emanation, implies dependence. . . . But there is still another objection to the doctrine, that the *substance* or *essence* of the Son and Holy Spirit is derived from the Father. It is inconsistent with the unity of the Godhead. If there be three substances (*οὐσίαι*), each divine, then have we three Gods, or Tritheism in reality. But if the Father produced the substance of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and they are "of one substance with the Father," then has the Father produced or begotten himself. — DR. D. W. CLARK, *in Methodist Quarterly Review for January*, 1851; fourth series, vol. iii. pp. 119–21.

THE TENDENCY OF A DENIAL OF CHRIST'S ETERNAL SONSHIP.

Probably no writers have unintentionally done so much in behalf of the simple Oneness of God, as those Trinitarians who have contended against the dogma of the eternal emanation of the Son and the Holy Ghost; and for his services, in this respect, the late Professor STUART stands pre-eminent. Of all the theories of a Triune God, that which regards the Son and Spirit as persons or hypostases who derived their existence from the Father, seems to be most compatible with the notion of a Trinity in Unity; for, however absurd that doctrine may be when connected with the idea of an eternal origin and of an equality of divine perfections, it preserves untouched the Supremacy and Self-existence of the Father, — the absolute Unity of that Being from whom all others take their origin. When, therefore, writers so acute as STUART point out the total unreasonableness and the antiscripturality of the dogma of eternal generation and procession, they clear at once the polemic field of much of that rubbish which has been brought down from the Nicene fathers; and, by their labors, the question of a simple Unity, or of a Trinity in Unity, assumes a more intelligible aspect. Occasionally, indeed, they may treat of the divine persons, so called, as relations or distinctions in the Deity, to which they do not profess to attach any clear or definite meaning; but, generally speaking, they treat of them as distinct, intelligent agents; and, this being the only rational sense in which the word "person" can be used of those who have communications one with another, and who speak and act in different capacities, the question at issue between Unitarians and Trinitarians will simply be, Whether it is more rational and scriptural to believe that the Supreme Being, the Underived Intelligence whose existence and attributes are displayed in the works of nature and on the pages of revelation, is one, and only one, person or being; or whether he — the one only true and self-existent God — consists of three self-existent

persons, equal to each other in power and glory, and each of them a self-existent God.

Our opinion as to the value of STUART'S services, and their tendency to promote Unitarian views of God, is confirmed by the following remarks of a celebrated divine: —

There are some who think that the Sonship of the Redeemer consists in an union of the second person of the Trinity, or the Word, with the human nature; and that he became the Son of God by becoming man; and therefore, before the incarnation, there was no Son of God, though there were a Trinity of persons in the Godhead. This opinion seems to be rather gaining ground and spreading of late. . . . It is worthy of consideration, whether this doctrine of the Filiation of Jesus Christ does not tend to reject the doctrine of the Trinity, as it has been held by those who have been called the Orthodox in the Christian church, and leads to what is called Sabellianism, which considers the Deity as but one person, and to be three only out of respect to the different manner or kind of his operations. This notion of the Sonship of Christ leads to suppose, that the Deity is the Father of the Mediator, without distinction of persons; and that by "Father," so often mentioned in the New Testament, and generally in relation to the Son, is commonly, if not always, meant Deity, without distinction of persons. If this be so, it tends to exclude all distinction of persons in God, and to make the personality of the Redeemer to consist wholly in the human nature; and, finally, to make his union with Deity no more, but the same which Arians and Socinians admit, viz., the same which takes place between God and good men in general, but in a higher and peculiar degree. . . . They who do not believe the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ, because it is mysterious and incomprehensible (and to some it appears to be full of contradiction), will, if they be consistent with themselves, for the same reason reject the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in one God. — DR. SAMUEL HOPKINS: *System of Doctrines*, chap. 10; *in Works*, vol. i. pp. 299, 306, 308.

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§ 7. THE TRINITY OF SELF-EXISTENT AND INDEPENDENT PERSONS.

The whole nature is in each hypostasis, and each has something peculiar to himself. The Father is entirely in the Son, and the Son entirely in the Father. . . . When we speak simply of the Son without reference to the Father, we truly and properly assert him to be self-existent, and therefore call him the sole first cause; but, when we

distinctly treat of the relation between him and the Father, we justly represent him as originating from the Father. . . . . We say that the Deity is absolutely self-existent: whence we confess also, that the Son, as God, independently of the consideration of person, is self-existent; but, as the Son, we say that he is of the Father. Thus his essence is unoriginated; but the origin of his person is God himself. — JOHN CALVIN: *Institutes*, book i. chap. xiii. 19, 25.

That is to say, the Son is both an originated or dependent and a self-existent being. The Son and (according to the same reasoning) the Spirit derived each his personality from the Father; but this personality contains within itself, besides that "something" which is "peculiar" to it, all that constitutes Deity; for "the whole nature is in each hypostasis," or person. But the nature or essence of Deity is unoriginated: it is self-existent. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are therefore, in one sense, three supreme, self-existent Gods; for each hypostasis is in possession of the "whole" divine nature: but, in another sense, they are — one of them, the first, an infinite and absolute being; the others, finite and dependent; for the latter received from the former each his "peculiar something," but not the former from the latter.

I cannot but conclude, that the divine personality, not only of the Father, but of the Son and Spirit, is as much independent and underived as the divine essence. — DR. THOMAS RIDGLEY: *Body of Divinity*, vol. i. p. 263.

If the Scriptures do reveal the fact, that there are three persons in the Godhead; that there is a distinction which affords grounds for the respective appellations of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; which lays the foundation for the application of the personal pronouns, *I*, *Thou*, *He*; which renders it proper to speak of "sending" and "being sent;" to speak of Christ as "being with God," "being in his bosom," and of other things of the like nature in the like way, and yet to hold that the divine nature equally belongs to each, — then it is, like every other fact revealed, to be received simply on the credit of divine revelation. . . . Instructed as I have been in respect to the nature of true Godhead, it is impossible for me to predicate this quality of any being who is neither self-existent nor independent. These are the ultimate, highest, plainest, and most certain of all the discretive attributes of Godhead, *i.e.* attributes which separate the Divine Being from all other possible beings. If the Son possess not these attributes, then he can be only a God of secondary rank. — MOSES STUART: *Letters to Channing*; *in Miscellanies*, pp. 23, 30

According to these representations, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three distinct persons; one of the persons — the Son — has the nature of true Godhead, that is, he is a self-existent and independent being; but each of the persons possesses the same divine nature; and, therefore, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three self-existent and independent beings or Gods. Such seems to be the just and necessary inference arising from the statements made by STUART in the most popular of his works. We do not, however, mean to conceal the fact, that, while admitting the word "person" to designate "a *real* distinction in the Godhead," this learned theologian denies that it describes "independent, conscious beings, possessing separate and equal essences and perfections" (p. 21); and that he even concedes the Unitarian principle, that there is in God "only one intelligent agent" (p. 42). But we cannot help thinking, that his own language, as quoted from pp. 23 and 30, leads to tritheistic results as certainly as that employed by many other Trinitarians, against whose theories he reasons with so much force. At such inconsistencies and contradictions, we, however, utter no surprise; for we feel none. They abound perhaps in the works of all who have written at any length in favor of the dogma of a Triune God; and it is natural that they should, when speculations are entered into, respecting the divine essence, far removed from the sublimely simple teachings of that Book, which, through its various contents of Gospel and Epistle, pronounces eternal life to consist, not in an acquaintance with the metaphysical jargon either of eternal emanations or of self-existent persons, but in a practical knowledge of the ONLY TRUE GOD, THE FATHER; and of HIS GREAT MESSENGER AND REPRESENTATIVE, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

REMARKS.

From such an opinion as this [the opinion of the younger TRELCATIUS, that the Son of God is *autotheos*, God of himself, or in his own right] necessarily follows the two mutually conflicting errors, Tritheism and Sabellianism; that is, (1.) It would ensue, as a necessary consequence from these premises, that there are three Gods, who have together and collaterally the divine essence. . . . Yet the proceeding of the origin of one person from another is the only foundation that has ever been used for defending the Unity of the divine essence in the Trinity of persons. (2.) It would likewise follow, as another consequence, that the Son would himself be the Father, because he would differ from the Father in nothing but in regard to name, which was the opinion of Sabellius. For — since it is peculiar to the Father to derive his Deity from himself, or (to speak more correctly) to derive it from no one — if, in the sense of being "God of himself," the Son be called *autotheos*, it follows that he is the Father. — ARMINIUS, *in Dr. Bangs's Life of Arminius*, pp. 231–2.

That the Holy Spirit is not from himself, as the Father is, is plain; for, that being supposed, there would be more first principles than one, and consequently more Gods than one; which is contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture. — DR. ISAAC BARROW: *The Christian Faith Explained, Sermon* 34; *in Works*, vol. ii. p. 554.

In his "Exposition of the Creed" (Works, vol. ii. p. 635), Dr. BARROW, with the same consistency of sentiment, says of our Saviour, that he hath not the divine essence of himself, but by communication from the Father. This great man evidently regarded the doctrine which Professor STUART, long after his time, professed, as leading to the conclusion that there are more Supreme Gods than one. We cannot help thinking that he is right; unless the absurdity of the inference points to a more sublime, a more simple, a more rational, and a more scriptural doctrine, — that, to the total exclusion of all Gods, whether derived or underived, THERE IS BUT ONE GOD, THE FATHER.

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§ 8. THE TRINITY OF DISTINCT, ETERNAL, AND INFINITE MINDS OR BEINGS.

[1] A "person" is an indivisible, intelligent, incommunicable being or subsistence, who is not sustained or does not subsist in or by another. — MELANCTHON. [2] The word "person" signifies a being in itself; that which understands, and acts with intelligence. — MORUS.

The following are these definitions in the original: [1] "Persona est substantia individua, intelligens, incommunicabilis, non sustenta in alia natura." [2] "Persona significat ens per se, quod intelligit, et cum intellectu agit." They are taken from Professor STUART, who repeatedly quotes them with disapprobation.

We affirm the Holy Spirit to be a person. By a person we understand a singular, subsistent, intellectual being; or, as Boethius defines it, an individual substance of a rational nature. — DR. ISÁAC BARROW: *The Christian Faith Explained; in Works*, vol. ii. p. 546.

Because some philosophers have asserted, though erroneously, both the whole world's eternity, and its being a necessary emanation also from the Deity, and consequently that it is undestroyable, — we shall therefore further add, that these second and third hypostases or persons of the Holy Trinity are not only therefore uncreated, because they were both eternal and necessary emanations, and likewise are unannihilable; but also because they are universal, each of them

comprehending the whole world, and all created things under it. which universality of theirs is the same thing with infinity; whereas all other beings, besides this Holy Trinity, are particular and finite. Now, we say, that no intellectual being, which is not only eternal and necessarily existent, or undestroyable, but also universal or infinite, can be a creature. . . . These three hypostases, or persons, are truly and really one God; not only because they have all essentially one and the same will, . . . but also because they are physically (if we may so speak) one also, and have a mutual περιχώρησις and ἐνύπαρξις, inexistence and permeation of one another. — DR. RALPH CUDWORTH: *Intellectual System of the Universe*, vol. i. pp. 736–7.

That the three divine persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are three infinite minds, really distinct from each other; that the Father is not the Son, nor the Holy Ghost either the Father or the Son, — is so very plain in Scripture, that I shall not spend time to prove it, especially since it is supposed in this controversy. . . . . It is plain the persons are perfectly distinct, for they are three distinct and infinite minds, and therefore three distinct persons; for a person is an intelligent being; and to say they are three divine persons, and not three distinct infinite minds, is both heresy and nonsense. The Scripture, I'm sure, represents Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as three intelligent beings, not as three powers or faculties of the same being, which is downright Sabellianism; for faculties are not persons, no more than memory, will, and understanding are three persons in one man . . . It would be very strange that we should own three persons, each of which persons is truly and properly God, and not own three infinite minds, as if any thing could be a God but an infinite mind. . . . . An infinite being signifies a being absolutely perfect, or which has all possible perfections. . . . . I plainly assert, that, as the Father is an eternal and infinite mind, so the Son is an eternal and infinite mind, distinct from the Father; and the Holy Ghost is an eternal and infinite mind, distinct both from Father and Son. . . . . The distinction of persons . . . cannot be more truly and aptly represented than by the distinction between three men; for Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are as really distinct persons as Peter, James, and John. . . . . Three minds and spirits, which have no other difference, are yet distinguished by self-consciousness, and are three distinct spirits. . . . . I grant that they [the three persons] are three holy spirits. . . . As there is but one God, so he is a holy being and a pure mind and spirit, as spirit is opposed to matter; and thus all three divine persons are holy

minds and spirits, essentially united into one infinite mind and spirit; but the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of the Father and the Son, and a distinct person in the Trinity, is but one. — DR. WM. SHERLOCK: *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, pp. 51, 66–7, 78, 101, 105, 119, 258–9.

We fear that the doctrine above inculcated, though abhorrent to right reason and Sacred Scripture, is yet unconsciously entertained by not a few professed Trinitarians; and in this opinion we are supported by the following remarks of Dr. KNAPP, in his Christian Theology, sect. xvi.: "Christians in general have been charged by Jews and Mahommedans with believing in a Tritheism; and it must be confessed, that too much ground for this charge has been afforded by the incautious expressions, with regard to the doctrine of the Trinity, which were common, especially among the ancient teachers of Christianity. And, even at the present day, there are many common and unenlightened Christians who fall into the same error. They make profession with their mouth of their faith in one God; while, at the same time, they conceive of him in their minds as three." Probably, however, the majority of Trinitarians incline more to a Tritheism of unequal Gods than to the sentiments held by Dean SHERLOCK, and regard the Son and Holy Spirit as possessing each a derived divine nature, but the Father only as the self-existent and independent God.

We make a few other extracts from this celebrated writer; so numbering them that COLERIDGE'S notes, which will afterwards be introduced as strictures, may be understood by the reader.

[1] We know not what the substance of an infinite mind is, nor how such substances as have no parts or extension can touch each other, or be thus externally united; but we know the unity of a mind or spirit reaches as far as its self-consciousness does, — for that is one spirit which knows and feels itself, and its own thoughts and motions; and, if we mean this by *circumincession*, three persons thus intimate to each other are numerically one. . . . [2] As the self-consciousness of every person to itself makes them distinct persons, so the mutual consciousness of all three divine persons to each other makes them all but one infinite God. As far as consciousness reaches, so far the unity of a spirit extends; for we know no other unity of a mind or spirit but consciousness. . . . [3] This one supreme God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, a Trinity in Unity, three persons and one God. Now, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, with all their divine attributes and perfections (excepting their personal properties, which the schools call the *modi subsistendi*, — that one is the Father, the other the Son, and the other the Holy Ghost, — which cannot be communicated to each other), are whole and entire in each person by a mutual con-

sciousness. Each person feels the other persons in himself, all their essential wisdom, power, goodness, justice, as he feels himself; and this makes them essentially one. . . . [4] I leave any man to judge whether this one single motion of will, which is in the same instant in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, can signify any thing else but a mutual consciousness, which makes them numerically one, and as intimate to each other as every man is to himself. . . . [5] You'll say, that there should be three persons, each of which is God, and yet but one God, is a contradiction; but what principle of natural reason does it contradict? . . . [6] It is demonstrable, that, if there be three persons and one God, each person must be God; and yet there cannot be three distinct Gods, but one. For, if each person be not God, all three cannot be God, unless the Godhead have persons in it which are not God. — DR. WILLIAM SHERLOCK: *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, pp. 50, 68, 99, 117, 147–9.

If here it shall be urged to me, that one individual, necessarily existent, spiritual being alone is God, and is all that is signified by the name of God; and therefore that three distinct, individual, necessarily existent, spiritual beings must unavoidably be three distinct Gods, — I would say, if by one individual, necessarily existent, spiritual being, you mean one such being, comprehending Father, Son, and Holy Ghost taken together, I grant it. But if by one individual, necessarily existent, spiritual being, you mean either the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost taken sejunctly, I deny it; for both the other are truly signified by the name of God too, as well as that one. . . . We Christians are taught to conceive, under the notion of God, a necessary, spiritual being, in which Father, Son, and Spirit do so necessarily co-exist as to constitute that being; and that, when we conceive any one of them to be God, that is but an inadequate, not an entire and full, conception of the Godhead. . . . Upon the whole, let such an union be conceived in the being of God, with such distinction, and one would think . . the absolute perfection of the Deity, and especially the perfect felicity thereof, should be much the more apprehensible with us. When we consider the most delicious society which would hence ensue among the so entirely consentient Father, Son, and Spirit, with whom there is so perfect rectitude, everlasting harmony, mutual complacency, unto highest delectation, . . . we for our parts cannot but hereby have in our minds a more gustful idea of a blessed state than we can conceive in mere eternal solitude. — JOHN HOWE: *Calm Enquiry concerning the Possibility of a Trinity; in Works*, vol. ii. pp. 549–50.

It may be a question whether the pious HOWE, in the preceding extract, speaks of three self-existent beings, or of three imperfect Gods constituting one perfect God; but there can be no doubt that he represents the Deity as made up of a council of distinct but harmonious intelligences, relieving what would otherwise have been the tedium of an "eternal solitude" by a free, equal interchange of converse and love. The old Hebrew prophets seem to have entertained very different conceptions of Jehovah: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever THOU hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, THOU art God." "I am Jehovah that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens ALONE; that spreadeth abroad the earth BY MYSELF."

REMARKS.

I do, I confess, charge this author [Dr. WILLIAM SHERLOCK] with asserting three Gods (although he does not *in terminis* express it), because of his asserting three distinct infinite minds or spirits. . . . The consequence of three Gods from three distinct infinite spirits is direct, manifest, and immediate; or rather, in truth, is not so properly a consequence, or one assertion following from another, as one and the very same thing expressed in other words. . . . For the words, "infinite mind or spirit," are but a periphrasis of the thing signified by the term "God." . . . . . If self-consciousness be the formal reason of personality in the three divine persons, then there is no repugnancy in the nature and reason of the thing itself but that there might be three thousand persons in the Deity as well as three. . . . If it be here said that the three persons are not only three self-conscious spirits, but also three distinct infinite self-conscious spirits (as our author says they are), I answer that there may be as well three thousand distinct infinite spirits as three; for infinity is as much inconsistent with the least plurality of infinites as with the greatest. . . . But how, then, comes there to be only three? Why, upon these grounds no other reason can be assigned for it but only that it was God's free determination that there should be three, and no more. And then the Trinity of persons must be an effect of God's will, and not a necessary condition of the divine nature; and the further consequence of this must be, that the three persons are three created beings, as proceeding from the free results of God's will, by virtue whereof they equally might or might not have been. . . . . I shall now pass to his [Sherlock's] other new notion of mutual consciousness, whereby those persons, who were distinguished from one another by their respective self-consciousnesses, are united and made one in nature by virtue of this mutual consciousness: concerning which notion also, I must profess

myself in the number of those who are by no means satisfied with it. . . . No act of knowledge can be the formal reason of an unity of nature in the persons of the blessed Trinity: but an act of mutual consciousness is an act of knowledge; and therefore no act of mutual consciousness can be the formal reason of an unity of nature in the three divine persons. The major I prove thus: Every act of knowledge supposes the unity of a thing or being from which that act flows, as antecedent to it, and therefore cannot be the formal reason of the said being. For still I affirm, that being, and consequently unity of being (which is the first affection of it), must in order of nature precede knowledge, and all other the like attributes of being. . . . . My reason for what I affirm — viz., that three distinct infinite minds, or spirits, are three distinct Gods — is this, that "God" and "infinite mind" or "spirit" are terms equipollent and convertible; God being truly and properly an infinite mind or spirit, and an infinite mind or spirit being as truly and properly God. . . . Whatsoever may be affirmed or denied of the one may with equal truth and propriety be affirmed or denied of the other. . . . Three infinite minds or spirits are three absolute, simple beings or essences, and so stand distinguished from one another by their whole beings or natures. . . . Three minds or spirits are three absolute beings, natures, or substances; and three distinct infinite minds or spirits are, accordingly, three distinct infinite absolute beings, natures, or substances; that is, in other words, they are three Gods. . . . . I desire this author to produce that revelation which declares the three persons of the blessed Trinity to be three distinct infinite minds or spirits; for I deny that there is any such. . . . These two propositions — viz., "God is one infinite mind or spirit;" and that other, "God is three distinct infinite minds or spirits" (which he must be, if the three divine persons are three distinct infinite minds or spirits) — are gross, palpable, and irreconcilable contradictions; and, because they are so, it is demonstrably certain that the said three persons are not three distinct infinite minds or spirits. . . . . If those three acts in the Godhead [original mind and wisdom, — the knowledge of itself, — the love of itself] are three distinct infinite substances (as he plainly says they are, . . . p. 130, . . .), then in the Godhead there are and must be three distinct Gods or Godheads; forasmuch as, an infinite substance being properly God, every distinct infinite substance is and must be a distinct God. — DR. ROBERT SOUTH: *Animadversions on Sherlock's Vindication*, pp. xvi. 101–3, 106–7, 119–22, 133–4, 216

The assertion, there are three infinite, distinct minds and substances in the Trinity, is false, impious, and heretical, contrary to the doctrine of the catholic church, and particularly to the received doctrine of the church of England. — VICE-CHANCELLOR AND HEADS OF COLLEGES BELONGING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

This censure was passed on SHERLOCK's doctrine, Nov. 25, 1695. See Lindsey's Apology, p. 63.

An hypothesis which leaves out the very nexus, that natural eternal union, or leaves it out of its proper place, and insists upon mutual consciousness, which at the most is but the consequence thereof, wants the principal thing requisite to the solving the unity of the Godhead. If two or three created spirits had never so perfect a mutual perspection of one another, *that* would not constitute them one thing, though it probably argue them to be so; and but probably, — for God might, no doubt, give them a mutual insight into one another, without making the mone. — JOHN HOWE: *Calm Enquiry concerning the Possibility of a Trinity; in Works*, vol. ii. p. 548.

Their explication of the Trinitarian doctrine is unscriptural who assert that there are three infinite, eternal, self-existent Beings, as distinct from each other as three men are; for this is to suppose three Gods, each being asserted to be distinctly *a* God. Whereas the Scripture says there is but one God; which God, and no other, spake by his Son Christ Jesus, being manifested in the flesh. — DR. BENJ. DAWSON: *Illustration of Texts*, pp. 129–30.

[1] Have these three infinite minds, at once self-conscious and conscious of each other's consciousness, always the very same thoughts? If so, this mutual consciousness is unmeaning or derivative; and the three do not cease to be three, because they are three sames. If not, then there is Tritheism evidently. . . . [2] Is not God conscious of every thought of man? and would SHERLOCK allow me to deduce the unity of the divine consciousness with the human? Sherlock's is doubtless a very plain and intelligible account of three Gods in the most absolute intimacy with each other, so that they are all as one; but by no means of three persons that are one God. I do not wonder that WATERLAND and the other followers of BULL were alarmed. . . . [3] Will not the Arian object, "You admit the *modus subsistendi* to be a divine perfection, and you affirm that it is incommunicable. Does it not follow, therefore, that there are perfections which the All-perfect does not possess?" This would not apply to Bishop Bull or

Waterland. . . . [4] Is not God conscious to all my thoughts, though I am not conscious of God's? Would Sherlock endure that I should infer: *Ergo*, God is numerically one with me, though I am not numerically one with God? . . . [5] Surely, never did argument vertiginate more. I had just acceded to Sherlock's exposition of the Trinity as the Supreme Being, his reflex act of self-consciousness and his love all forming one Supreme Mind; and now he tells me that each is the whole Supreme Mind, and denies that three, each *per se* the whole God, are not the same as three Gods! I grant that division and separation are terms inapplicable; yet surely three distinct though undivided Gods are three Gods. That the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are the one true God, I fully believe; but not Sherlock's exposition of the doctrine. . . . [6] Three persons having the same nature are three persons; and if to possess without limitation the divine nature, as opposed to the human, is what we mean by God, why, then, three such persons are three Gods, and will be thought so till GREGORY NYSSEN can persuade us that John, James, and Peter, each possessing the human nature, are not three men. John is a man, James is a man, and Peter is a man; but they are not three men, but one man! — S. T. COLERIDGE: *Literary Remains; in Works*, vol. v. pp. 389–94, 398–9.

The preceding observations are numbered to correspond with those from SHERLOCK, so marked, in pp. 282–3 of the present work.

That there is but one God, the Scriptures everywhere assert; and this is agreeable to reason, and the works of creation and providence which we behold; and the contrary supposition is most absurd and undesirable, and really involves in it infinite evil. God must be a self-existent Being, which is the same with existing necessarily; but necessary existence must be infinite. . . . Therefore there can be but one first Cause, who exists necessarily, and without beginning, for there can be but one infinite Being. To suppose another, or a second, necessarily excludes the first; and to suppose the first, necessarily excludes the second and any other infinite Being. The same is evident from the consideration of the divine perfections. God is infinite power, infinite wisdom; but there cannot be two or more infinite wisdoms, &c., because this is a contradiction. Infinite power is all the power there is or can be, and is clearly inconsistent with another power distinct from that, which is also infinite. Moreover, if we make the impossible supposition that there are two or more infinite Beings, they

must be perfectly alike in all respects, or not. If not perfectly alike, and without any difference in any respect, then one or the other must be imperfect; for absolutely infinite perfection admits of no variation or difference; so that, if any two beings differ in any respect, they cannot both be absolutely perfect; therefore cannot both be God. But, if they are perfectly alike in every respect and every thing, then they are perfectly one and the same; and the supposition destroys itself, being a direct contradiction. And there can be no possible need of more than one God; and therefore, were this possible, it is not desirable. There can really be no more existence than one infinite Being, or any addition to infinite perfection and excellence; therefore no more can be desired, and nothing can be effected or done, more than he can do. In a word, he is all-sufficient, and no addition can be made to this, or even conceived. — DR. SAMUEL HOPKINS: *System of Doctrines*, chap. 3; *in Works*, vol. i. p. 61.

This demonstration of God's oneness is not made by its author in refer ence to any theory of three divine persons; but it may be well applied to all such propositions as convey the notion, that the Deity consists of several distinct, eternal, and equal or unequal intelligences, whether called persons or beings. Dr. HOPKINS here virtually refutes his own Trinitarian or Tritheistic views, as will be quoted in p. 290.

Whatever disclaimer may be made as to Tritheism, the comparison of individuality in the Godhead with that among men does essentially involve theoretical Tritheism. If not, then how could the Greeks be accused of polytheism, who believed in a common nature among the *Dii majores*? And if not, then we must come to the absurd conclusion of GREGORY of Nyssa, that it is *catachresis* when we speak of Peter and Paul and Barnabas as three men, because in truth they have but one common human nature. It is impossible to put the mind upon receiving such an incongruity, without its reluctating. It instinctively revolts. . . . Now and then, a zealous partisan of the Nicene Symbol — a BULL, a WATERLAND, a JONES of Nayland, or some writer of this cast — has told us of three distinct consciousnesses, wills, and affections in the Godhead, and of the eternal "society" which must have always been in it. But the ears of intelligent Christians in general are not now open to these things. Yet still the unwary and unthinking are affected by them, and led unconsciously, it may be, into real Tritheism. . . . . Of some of these definitions, i.e. those of MELANCTHON and MORUS and some others, it might be said, that the word "person," as applied to three different men, could

scarcely receive a more full and complete sense than is given it in respect to the Godhead. Tritheism in theory seems to be the unavoidable deduction from such definitions. . . . The theory of personality which represents three intelligent beings, distinct in such a full sense that each has his own individual consciousness, will, affections, purposes, &c., must amount to theoretical Tritheism; for such are the principal distinctions that exist between three individual men. . . . Any definition of personality in the Godhead which represents person to be *ens per se*, or *substantia individua non sustentata in alia natura*, . . . seems plainly and substantially to infringe on the idea that there is but one and numerically the same substance in the Godhead. I am not able to see why it does not clearly involve a logical contradiction. — MOSES STUART, *in Biblical Repository*, vol. v. p. 314; and vol. vi. pp. 84, 92–4.

For other valuable remarks on this tritheistic Trinity, STUART'S supplementary note to his Second Letter to Channing (Miscellanies, pp. 60–2) may be consulted. They will be found applicable also to the theory of a Triune God presented in the following subsection; for, except in mere terms, there seems to be no difference whatever between a Trinity of distinct minds or beings and a Trinity of distinct persons, subsistences, or agents.

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§ 9. THE TRINITY OF DISTINCT PERSONS, SUBSISTENCES, OR AGENTS.

We should carefully study and duly be affected with that gracious consent, and as it were confederacy, of the glorious Three, in designing and prosecuting our good; their unanimous agreement in uttering those three mighty words of favor to mankind, *Faciamus, Redimamus, Salvemus*, — "Let us make man out of nothing; Let us recover him from sin and perdition; Let us crown him with joy and salvation." We should with grateful resentments observe them conspiring to employ their wisdom in contriving fit means and methods to exert their power in effectual accomplishment of what was requisite to the promoting of our welfare, . . in prosecution of that gracious design which their joint goodness had projected for us. . . . We should set our mind on God the Father, before the foundation of the world from all eternity, . . resolving to send his own dear Son from his bosom, to procure and purchase the redemption of mankind; . . . then actually sending his only Son, and clothing him with human flesh; . . . also sending and bestowing his Holy Spirit to dwell in them [who obey Christ]. — DR. I. BARROW: *Def. of the Blessed Trinity*: *Works*, vol. ii. pp. 157–8.

[By "person"] I certainly mean a real person, an hypostasis; no mode, attribute, or property. . . . Each divine person is an individual intelligent agent; but, as subsisting in one undivided substance, they are all together, in that respect, but one undivided intelligent agent. . . . The church never professed three hypostases in any other sense but as they mean three persons. — DR. DANIEL WATERLAND: *Vindication of Christ's Divinity*, pp. 350–1.

The Scriptures teach us that there are three in this one God, — not three Gods, for this would be a contradiction; but that this infinite Being exists in such a manner as to be three distinct subsistences or persons, and yet but one God. . . . These three are spoken of or addressed in the Scriptures in such terms as are used to denote a distinct personality, such as *I*, *thou*, *he*, or *him*. Thus the Father speaks of himself and the Son; and thus the Son speaks to the Father, and of him, and of the Holy Spirit. . . . . The three persons in the Godhead form an infinitely high, holy, and happy society, — the original and perfect pattern of all true love, friendship, and happiness. . . . Jesus Christ, the Mediator, is the medium by which the society of the redeemed in heaven will be united to the infinitely more excellent and perfect society, — the eternal Trinity of persons, who dwell in the infinitely high and holy place, far beyond the reach or comprehension of creatures; from whom the same benevolence and social love is shed down through the Mediator on these redeemed ones, forming them into one most happy society, in union with the blessed Trinity, and so as to be a little image of the Deity, — the Three in One, and One in Three. — DR. SAMUEL HOPKINS: *System of Doctrines*, chaps. 3 and 13; *in Works*, vol. i. pp. 62, 65, and vol. ii. pp. 58–9.

The Scripture represents the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as distinctly possessed of personal properties. The Father is represented as being able to understand, to will, and to act, of himself; the Son is represented as being able to understand, to will, and to act, of himself; and the Holy Ghost is represented as being able to understand, to will, and to act, of himself. According to these representations, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three distinct persons, or agents. Accordingly, they speak to and of each other as such. . . . Thus the Scripture leads us to conceive of the one living and true God as existing in three distinct persons, each of whom is possessed of all personal properties, and is able to understand, to will, and to act, as a free, voluntary, almighty agent. Hence the Scripture represents the

three persons in the sacred Trinity as absolutely equal in every divine perfection. . . . . If there be but one God, then it necessarily follows that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are not three Gods, but only three persons in one self-existent, independent, eternal Being. The three persons are not one person, but one God; or the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three in respect to their personality, and but one in respect to their nature and essence. . . . We find no difficulty in conceiving of three divine persons. It is just as easy to conceive of three divine persons as of three human persons. No man perhaps ever found the least difficulty in conceiving of the Father as a distinct person from the Son, nor in conceiving of the Son as a distinct person from the Holy Ghost, nor in conceiving of the Holy Ghost as a distinct person from both the Father and Son; but the only difficulty in this case lies in conceiving these three persons to be but one. And it is evident that no man can conceive three divine persons to be one divine person, any more than he can conceive three angels to be but one angel; but it does not hence follow that no man can conceive that three divine persons should be but one divine Being. For, if we only suppose that "being" may signify something different from "person" in respect to Deity, then we can easily conceive that God should be but one Being, and yet exist in three persons. . . . . The doctrine of the Sacred Trinity, as represented in Scripture, gives us a clear and striking view of the all-sufficiency of God. Since he exists in three equally divine persons, there is a permanent foundation in his own nature for the most pure and perfect blessedness. Society is the source of the highest felicity; and that society affords the greatest enjoyment which is composed of persons of the same character, of the same disposition, of the same designs, and of the same pursuits. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who are three equally divine persons in the one living and true God, are perfectly united in all these respects; and therefore God's existing a Trinity in Unity necessarily renders him the all-sufficient source of his own most perfect felicity. . . . . We have as clear an idea of these three divine persons as of three human persons. There is no mystery in the personality of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, though there is a profound mystery in their being one God. — DR. N. EMMONS: *Works*, vol. iv. pp. 107–8, 110–11, 114–15, 125.

This is perhaps as plain and intelligible a statement of the doctrine of an hypostatic Trinity as can be found anywhere; and is the less repulsive from its omission of the palpably inconsistent notions of eternal generation and procession which have been inculcated in so many creeds and confessions.

That is, it is plain and intelligible in so far as it asserts, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three distinct persons or agents, equal in every divine perfection; each capable of thinking, willing, and acting of himself; and each deriving his happiness from the society of the others. To such language, gross and polytheistic as a portion of it seems, we can attach definite conceptions. But, when it asserts that these three equally divine persons are only one Being, it either expresses no ideas whatever, or utters a manifest absurdity; for, as applied to an intelligent, thinking, voluntary agent, it is inconceivable that the term "person" can mean any thing else but a *being*. The words are synonymous or convertible. God is a person or being, because he *is*, thinks, feels, wills, and acts: Jesus Christ is a person or being, because *he* is, thinks, feels, wills, and acts. They are *distinct* persons or beings, because each of them has his own separate consciousness, will, and mode of action. To affirm, then, that these persons, with another called the Holy Ghost, constitute but one Being, is a contradiction in ideas; or is equivalent to asserting that the three persons are only one person, — which is a contradiction in terms.

REMARKS.

Although . . . I would not drop the use of the word "person," yet I would protest against the license which is often taken in speaking of the persons of the Godhead. When authors speak of their eternal and mutual society, and converse together; of their taking counsel together and deliberating, just as if an effort were necessary in order to harmonize them, or to bring them to one and the same conclusion, or to be of one and the same mind, or in order to cast light upon what it may be proper for them to do; when they tell us of one person entering into covenant with another, simply as divine, and before the foundation of the world; of one divine person commanding, and another, simply as divine, obeying, — all this, and much more of the same nature, so long as it is indulged in, will continue to bring upon Trinitarians the reproach of Polytheism; and I had almost said that the reproach is not destitute of at least a semblance of justice. — MOSES STUART, *in Biblical Repository for July*, 1835; vol. vi. pp. 99, 100.

A very large portion of the Christian teachers, together with the general mass of disciples, undoubtedly hold three real living persons in the interior nature of God; that is, three consciousnesses, wills, hearts, understandings. Certain passages of Scripture, supposed to represent the three persons as covenanting, co-operating, and co-presiding, are taken, accordingly, so to affirm in the most literal and dogmatic sense. And some very distinguished living teachers are frank enough to acknowledge, that any intermediate doctrine, between

the absolute unity of God and a social unity, is impossible and incredible; therefore, that they take the latter. Accordingly, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are, in their view, socially united only, and preside in that way, as a kind of celestial tritheocracy, over the world. They are one God simply in the sense that the three will always act together with a perfect consent or coincidence. This view has the merit that it takes consequences fairly, states them frankly, and boldly renounces orthodoxy, at the point opposite to Unitarianism, to escape the same difficulties. It denies that the three persons are "the *same* in substance," and asserts, instead, three substances; and yet, because of its clear opposition to Unitarianism, it is counted safe, and never treated as a heresy. However, when it is applied to Christ and his work, then it breaks down into the same confusion as the more common view, reducing the Son to a really subordinate and subject position, in which the proper attributes of Deity are no longer visible or supposable. — DR. HORACE BUSHNELL: *God in Christ*, pp. 130–1.

The moment we conceive of the Deity as consisting of three distinct individuals, each possessing consciousness, affections, will, of his own, we contradict and virtually abandon the true scriptural, simple idea of one God. Whatever guard we may throw about our language, we do in fact, from that moment, believe not in one God, but in three. . . . . A leading New England divine [Dr. NATHANAEL EMMONS] . . . thus discourses upon the mode of the divine existence: "We find no difficulty in conceiving of three divine persons. It is just as easy to conceive of three divine persons as of three human persons. . . . There is no mystery in the personality of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, though there is a profound mystery in their being one God." Using the term "personality" in this sense, conceiving of the three divine persons as we do of three human persons, we are quite ready to admit, with the author, that there is both a difficulty and a profound mystery, nay, we should certainly add an utter impossibility, in conceiving of these three as one Being. It does not remove the difficulty to say, that "*being* may signify something different from *person* in respect to Deity," and therefore "we may easily conceive that God should be but one Being, and yet exist in three persons." For "being" and "person" signify different things as respects man also, yet it is not easy to conceive of three human persons constituting one human being. Nor is it any advance towards the removal of this difficulty to say, what is doubtless true, that "the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three in respect to their personality, and but one in respect to their

nature and essence." Personality is here supposed to be something distinct from nature and essence, so that what pertains to the one does not pertain to the other. Very true. But the personality of the Father, Son, and Spirit, according to the author, consists in this, that each "is able to understand, to will, and to act, of himself," and to do so "as a free, voluntary, almighty agent." But do not understanding, will, and free voluntary action, pertain, we ask, to the *very nature* and *essence* of Deity? Can we conceive of Deity as essentially, and in his original nature, destitute of these properties? If not, then as personality consists in these things, what becomes of the distinction just made? and how is it that a threefold personality, in this human sense, does not also involve a threefold nature and essence? . . . If the doctrine of the Divine Unity be not essentially swept away and abandoned by these and the like representations, then we are at a loss to conceive what idea can be attached in any man's mind to that word "unity." It is replied, the Scriptures nowhere teach that the Unity of God is just like *our* unity. True. But what, we ask again, is the proper and primitive meaning of that word "unity"? Are there several kinds of unity, as there are several shades of a color, or several races of men? Strictly speaking, is there any other unity but numerical unity? And when we think of a thing as being one, or as more than one, is not this one of the simplest ideas that the human mind can form, — one of its elementary conceptions? Is it not evident, that, when we speak of three or more personal, individual, distinct agents, each willing and acting for himself, as being one, we use the term in a secondary, and not in its proper and primitive, sense? We mean they are one in sentiment, one in heart, one in purpose and action, &c. In this sense, any three men, or any number of men, may be one. . . . It devolves on those who conceive of the three divine, as they do of three human, persons, not merely to admit that it is a mysterious thing how these three are one Being, but to show that in any intelligible sense, or any proper use of terms, they *can* be one; that three conscious, intelligent, voluntary agents, thinking, feeling, willing, acting, each for himself, distinct from each other, do or can in any proper sense constitute *one Being*. . . . The view under consideration has led those who adopt it to a method of speaking of the Sacred Trinity which seems to us altogether objectionable. They are accustomed to represent the divine persons as consulting together, forming plans, and enjoying mutual intercourse and companionship. [Here the critic takes from Dr. EMMONS a passage which appears in the latter part

of our extract, p. 291; and he goes on to say:] We ask, now, whether there be not, in all this, the essential element of Tritheism. We put it to every candid and intelligent mind, whether, if the doctrine of Divine Unity were altogether stricken out of the Bible, and in place of it stood the revelation of three Gods, it would be possible to speak of the society and companionship mutually enjoyed by the three, in terms plainer, more direct, and appropriate, than the above. — JOSEPH HAVEN, Jun., *in the New Englander for February*, 1850; vol. viii. (new series, vol. ii.) pp. 17–21.

The article from which we have made so long an extract seems to us to contain a masterly exposure of a theory of the Trinity, which, with some slight varieties, has been advocated by many distinguished divines. It is not the less effective because it proceeds from the pen of one who, in opposition to the views of Unitarians, believes (*id.* pp. 5, 6) that "the Son and Spirit are really and absolutely divine."

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§ 10. THE TRINITY OF THE IPSEITY, THE ALTERITY, AND THE COMMUNITY.

In the Trinity there is, 1. Ipseity; 2. Alterity; 3. Community. You may express the formula thus: —

God, the Absolute Will or Identity, =
Prothesis.
The Father = Thesis. The Son = Antithesis. The Spirit = Synthesis.

The Trinity is, 1. The Will; 2. The Reason, or Word; 3. The Love, or Life. As we distinguish these three, so we must unite them in one God. The union must be as transcendent as the distinction..... My faith is this: God is the Absolute Will: it is his Name, and the meaning of it. It is the Hypostasis. As begetting his own Alterity, the Jehovah, the Manifested, he is the Father; but the Love and the Life — the Spirit — proceeds from both. — SAMUEL T. COLERIDGE. *Table Talk; in Works*, vol. vi. pp. 289–90, 314, 517.

We make no pretension to understand COLERIDGE'S formulas of the Trinity. But the curious reader may, if he choose, study what is further said on this subject in the "Literary Remains" of the same author (Works, vol. v. pp. 18, 19, 355–6, 404). In one of these passages, he regrets that "the total idea of the $4 = 3 = 1$, — of the adorable Tetractys, eternally self-manifested in the Triad, Father, Son, and Spirit, — was never in its cloudless unity present to" Dr. WATERLAND, whose writings he so much venerated.

REMARKS.

We are free to say for ourselves, that we think COLERIDGE committed an error in leaving the scheme of the Triad for that of the Tetrad, in his construction. The symbols of the church, and the Christian mind, proceed upon the hypothesis of a simple Triad, which is also a Monad, and hence teach a Trinity *in* Unity and a Unity *in* Trinity. Coleridge, on the other hand, proceeds upon the scheme of the Pagan Trinity, of which hints are to be found in Plato, and which can be traced back as far as Pythagoras, — the scheme, namely, of a Monad logically anterior to, and other than, the Triad, — of a Monad which originally is not a Triad, but *becomes* one, — whereby four factors are introduced into the problem. The error in this scheme consists in this its assumption of an aboriginal Unity existing primarily by itself, and in the order of nature, *before* a Trinity, — of a *ground* for the Trinity, or, in Coleridge's phrase, a *prothesis*, which is not in its own nature either triune or personal, but is merely the impersonal base from which the Trinity proper is evolved. In this way, we think, a process of development is introduced into the Godhead which is incompatible with its immutable perfection, and with that golden position of the schoolmen that God is "actus purissimus sine ulla potentialitate." There is no latency in the Divine Being. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. We think we see, in this scheme of Coleridge, the influence of the pantheistic conception of potentiality, instead of the theistic conception of self-completeness; and that, if he had taken the distinct and full personality of the finite spirit as the image and likeness of the Infinite Personality, and, having steadfastly contemplated the necessary conditions of self-consciousness in man, had merely freed them from the limitations of the Finite, — of time and degree, — he would have been more successful, certainly more continuous and progressive. While we say this, however, we are far from believing that Coleridge's practical faith as a Christian in the Trinity was in the least affected by this tendency to modalism in his speculative construction of the doctrine; a modalism, too, which, as we have remarked above, is logically, and ought actually to have been, precluded by the position, which he heartily adopted, of the intrinsic rationality and necessity of the doctrine. Few minds in the whole history of the Christian church, as we believe, have had more awful and adoring views of the Triune God, or have bowed down in more absolute and lowly worship before the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. — PROF. SHEDD: *Int. Essay to Coleridge's Works*, vol. i. p. 44.

§ 11. THE TRINITY OF DISTINCTIONS, OR MYSTERIOUS PERSONS.

If there be in our gospels a doctrine concerning which a good logician has apparent cause to exclaim, it is this: A God who has but one essence, and who nevertheless has three persons; the Son, and the Holy Spirit who is God; and these three are but one. The Father, who is with the Son, does not become incarnate when the Son becomes incarnate. The Son, who is with the Father, no longer maintains the rights of justice in Gethsemane, when the Father maintains them. The Holy Spirit, who is with the Father and the Son, proceeds from both in a manner ineffable; and the Father and the Son, who is with the Holy Spirit, do not proceed in this manner. Are not these ideas contradictory? No, my brethren. If we should say that God has but one essence, and that he has three essences in the same sense that we maintain he has but one, — if we should say that God is three in the same sense he is one, — it would be a contradiction. But this is not our thesis. We believe, on the faith of a divine book, that God is one in the sense to which we give the confused name of "essence." We believe that he is three in a sense to which we give the confused name of "persons." We determine neither what is this essence, nor what is this personality. That surpasses reason, but does not revolt it. . . . . To find a contradiction, it is requisite to have a distinct idea of what I call "essence," and of what I call "person;" and, as I profess to be perfectly ignorant of the one and the other, it is impossible I should find an absurdity. — JAMES SAURIN: *Sermons*, No. XCIII. vol. ii. p. 357.

On this passage we have to observe, that the reasoning is either wholly unintelligible, and therefore useless; or it proves, notwithstanding the disclaimer, if it can prove any thing, that there are three Gods. If, in using the terms "essence" and "personality," we cannot determine what their meaning is, — if we cannot discriminate between the one expression and the other, or have only a "confused" notion of their import, — it is the merest verbiage to say that God is one in his essence, and three in his personality. We might as well, in addressing another, employ the words of a language, the elements of which were understood by neither of the parties. If, however, by the "essence" of God we mean his properties or attributes, — and of these we can have clear, though limited, conceptions, — then, by attributing the divine properties severally to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, by regarding them each as God, or by treating of them as really divine persons, acting in different and opposite capacities, as the pious and eloquent writer represents them, and not as mere characters or relations, we unquestionably think and speak of them as three distinct Gods. To say,

then, that three essentially divine persons are only one God, is as absurd as to say that three persons, partaking each of the characteristics of humanity, are only one man; and, so far from being a mystery, — something either hidden or incomprehensible, — it is a manifest absurdity, and thus not only "surpasses reason," but "revolts it."

We are led to infer from several incidental glimpses afforded us by revelation, that there are certain distinctions in the divine nature, which correspond in some measure with the several relations to ourselves in which God has manifested himself to us. But what these distinctions are, we are quite unable to comprehend; nor are we encouraged to indulge in curiously inquiring. Scripture chiefly teaches us what they are not, guarding us carefully against the notion of three Gods: but what are the relations to each other of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, it leaves unexplained; dwelling strongly on their relations to us, as constituting a threefold manifestation to mankind of the one God. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Sermons on Various Subjects*, pp. 199, 200.

The archbishop goes on to say, that, "in relation to ourselves," this threefold manifestation "is, in one respect, as if there really were three distinct beings." Such a result is, we think, not surprising; for it seems scarcely possible, so far as regards God and Christ, that any "inference from incidental glimpses" should overcome the irresistible conclusion derived from every page of the New Testament, that, however one in disposition, design, and works, they were really and truly distinct beings. On "the threefold-manifestation" theory, which regards the word "person," when applied severally to the Father and the Son, as denoting "character" (*id.* p. 203), Christianity, instead of being a revelation, would be a riddle.

I believe, — I. That God is one, numerically one, in essence and attributes. In other words, the infinitely perfect Spirit, the Creator and Preserver of all things, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, has numerically the same essence and the same perfections, so far as they are known to us. To particularize: the Son possesses, not simply a similar or equal essence and perfections, but numerically the same as the Father, without division and without multiplication. II. The Son (and also the Holy Spirit) does, in some respect, truly and really, not merely nominally or logically, differ from the Father. . . . We profess to use it [the word "person"] merely because of the poverty of language; merely to designate our belief of a *real* distinction in the Godhead; but not to describe independent, conscious beings, possessing separate and equal essences and perfections. — MOSES STUART: *Letters to Channing; in Miscellanies*, pp. 18, 21.

In this definition of a Triune God, it will be noticed that the cautious and acute theologian who penned it avoids the use of the word "person," though he afterwards tries to explain it in conformity with his theory. But does he escape from the necessary consequences of all definitions of the Trinitarian doctrine? Certainly not. The first article of his belief — so expressed as to speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, with a verb in the singular number — implies only that the Son and Holy Ghost are one and the same existence or intelligent agent as the Father, or that all the three are but names of the one God, "the infinitely perfect Spirit." This form of faith might, we think, be subscribed by any believer in a nominal or modal Trinity. The second article is of a different character, and denies the Son and Spirit to be the same as the Father; asserting that they are truly and really, not nominally, different from the Father; or, as we cannot avoid explaining the proposition, that they are distinct intelligent beings, agents, or persons. Not having used the latter term, however, and taking for granted that his doctrine is the same as that which is commonly defined by the word "person," but knowing that it is employed and understood by many to denote a living, self-conscious, and determining agent, the writer affirms that it should designate merely real distinctions in the Godhead, and not independent, conscious beings. That is to say, it should be used as significant of no ideas whatever. Yet, strange as it may seem, though perfectly natural, this vague and meaningless theory — this "Trinity of Distinctions" or Non-entities — is usually lost sight of by its propounders, who, both in their polemical and practical writings, are forced by the laws of language, of common sense, and of Scripture, to treat of God and Christ as separate existences, having each his distinct, individual consciousness, will, and agency.

Trinitarians have said a thousand times, that they use the word "person," in this connection, not in its ordinary acceptation, as signifying a separate, individual being; not as denoting a perfectly distinct consciousness, understanding, and will. They use it, in place of a better word (as they have a perfect right to do, defining the sense), to set forth one of the ineffable personal distinctions in the mysterious and adorable Unity of the Godhead. — DR. ENOCH POND: *Review of Dr. Bushnell's "God in Christ,"* pp. 18, 19.

And, in defining it, do they ever assign any sense, capable of being understood, which does not necessarily involve the notion either of a mere character or relation, or of a real, perfect, individual agent or being; either of a property or representation of God, or of one of the Deities in the Godhead? Does not the definition imply either Sabellianism or Tritheism; either a shadowy and unscriptural form of Unitarianism, or a plurality of distinct Gods?

While it [the modern Trinitarian theory] admits a certain distinction eternally existing in the nature of the Godhead, to which it

applies the term "hypostasis" or "subsistence" or "person," it does not for a moment attach to this distinction the idea of so many separate individual existences. Not in any such sense does it employ the word "person." CALVIN himself is careful distinctly to disavow any such idea: "They deceive themselves in dreaming of three separate individuals, each of them possessing a part of the divine essence.... The names of Father, Son, and Spirit, certainly imply a real distinction; let no one suppose them to be mere epithets by which God is variously designated from his works; but it is a distinction, not a division." ... Just what that distinction is, just what relation these hypostases hold to each other and to that divine nature in which they subsist, it is neither for this theory nor any other to define. Neither Calvin has attempted this, nor any other man in his right mind. — JOSEPH HAVEN, Jun., *in the New Englander for February*, 1850; vol. viii. (new series, vol. ii.) pp. 6, 7.

Unless we misapprehend the import of the preceding extract, the writers mean that the one God is to be regarded under three different aspects; that, for reasons inherent in his very nature, the one Infinite Being disclosed himself to mankind under the totally dissimilar characters of a Father and a Son, as well as that of a Holy Spirit. Of this theory of a Triune God, we shall, in the following subsection, offer a variety of representations.

REMARKS.

While the Unity [of God] is thus confused and lost in the Threeness [namely, by the representation that the three persons are three sets of attributes inhering in a common substance], perhaps I should also admit that the Threeness sometimes appears to be clouded or obscured by the Unity. Thus it is sometimes protested, that in the word "person" nothing is meant beyond a "threefold distinction;" though it will always be observed, that nothing is really meant by the protestation; that the protester goes on to speak and reason of the three, not as being only somewhats, or distinctions, but as metaphysical and real persons. Or the three are sometimes compared, in their union, to the soul, the life-principle, and the body, united in one person called a man, — an illustration which, if it has any point or appositeness at all, shows how God may be one, and not three; for the life and the body are not persons. Or, if the soul be itself the life, and the body its external development, which is possible, then, in a yet stricter sense, there is but one person in them all. Probably there is a degree of alternation, or inclining from one side to the other, in this view of Trinity, as the mind struggles, now to embrace

one, and now the other, of two incompatible notions. . . . . It is a somewhat curious fact in theology, that the class of teachers who protest over the word "person," declaring that they mean only a *three-fold distinction*, cannot show that there is really a hair's breadth of difference between their doctrine and the doctrine asserted by many of the later Unitarians. They may teach or preach in a very different manner; they probably do; but the theoretic contents of their opinion cannot be distinguished. Thus they say that there is a certain divine person in the man Christ Jesus; but that, when they use the term "person," they mean not a person, but a certain indefinite and indefinable distinction. The later Unitarians, meantime, are found asserting that God is present in Christ in a mysterious and peculiar communication of his being, so that he is the living embodiment and express image of God. If, now, the question be raised, Wherein does the indefinable *distinction* of one differ from the mysterious and peculiar *communication* of the other, or how does it appear that there is any difference? there is no living man, I am quite sure, who can invent an answer. Such is the confusion produced by attempting to assert a real and metaphysical Trinity of persons in the divine nature. Whether the word is taken at its full import, or diminished away to a mere something called a "distinction," there is produced only contrariety, confusion, practical negation, not light. — DR. HORACE BUSHNELL: *God in Christ*, pp. 133–6.

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§ 12. THE TRINITY OF NAMES, MODES, RELATIONS, OR CHARACTERS; OF IMPERSONATIONS, DEVELOPMENTS, OR MANIFESTATIONS.

As God afforded a clearer manifestation of himself at the advent of Christ, the three persons also then became better known. . . . Nor can it be doubted but that, in this solemn commission, "Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Christ intended to testify that the perfect light of faith was now exhibited. For this is equivalent to being baptized into the name of the one God, who hath clearly manifested himself in the Father, Son, and Spirit: whence it evidently appears, that in the divine essence there exist three persons, in whom is known the one God. — JOHN CALVIN: *Institutes*, book i. chap. xiii. 16.

It is exceedingly difficult to make out CALVIN'S opinion respecting the Trinity. In some places of the "Institutes," he seems to speak of Father,

Son, and Holy Spirit as three self-existent subsistences, — which is neither more nor less than Tritheism; in others, as if the Son and the Spirit derived their peculiar properties from the Father, — which involves the doctrine of One Supreme Being and two unequal and dependent Gods; and in the passage just quoted, as if the Father, Son, and Spirit were only manifestations of the one God, just as the sun, moon, and stars, or any other object in creation, are manifestations of the Deity, or are the Divinity himself, — which is either Sabellianism or Pantheism. In the following passage (book i. chap. xiii. 18), if the former part of it be interpreted by the latter, CALVIN will be thought to reason as if the terms Father, Son, and Spirit signified, not distinct intelligences in the Godhead, but merely attributes or operations of the Deity, — "Father" meaning a principle of action; "Son," wisdom, counsel, and arrangement; "Spirit," power or efficacy: "To the Father is attributed the principle of action, the fountain and source of all things; to the Son, wisdom, counsel, and the arrangement of all operations; and the power and efficacy of the action is assigned to the Spirit. Moreover, though eternity belongs to the Father, and to the Son and Spirit also, since God can never have been destitute of his wisdom or his power, and in eternity we must not inquire after any thing prior or posterior; yet the observation of order is not vain or superfluous, while the Father is mentioned as first; in the next place, the Son, as from him; and then the Spirit, as from both. For the mind of every man naturally inclines to the consideration, first, of God; secondly, of the wisdom emanating from him; and, lastly, of the power by which he executes the decrees of his wisdom."

To find out the true sense of the word "person," as applied to the Trinity, we are to consider what was the true sense of the word *persona* in approved Latin authors. It did signify the state, quality, or condition of a man, as he stands related to other men. Hence are those phrases frequent: *Personam imponere*, to put a man into an office, or confer a dignity upon him; *induere personam*, to take upon him the office; *sustinere personam*, to bear an office, or execute an office; *disponere personam*, to resign the office; so *agere personam*, to act a person. So that there is nothing of contradiction, nothing absurd or strange, for the same man to sustain divers persons, or divers persons to meet in the same man, according to the true and proper notion of the word "person." Thus Tully: *Sustineo unus tres personas; meam, adversarii, judicis*, — "I, being one and the same man, sustain three persons; that of my own, that of my adversary, and that of the judge." And David was, at the same time, son of Jesse, father of Solomon, and king of Israel. Now, if three persons, in the proper sense of the word "person," may be one man, what hinders but that three divine persons, in a sense metaphorical, may be one

God? And what hinders but that the same God, distinguished according to these three considerations [those of God the Creator, or God the Father; God the Redeemer, or God the Son; and God the Sanctifier, or God the Holy Ghost], may fitly be said to be three persons? Or, if the word "person" do not please, three *somewhats*, that are but one God? — DR. JOHN WALLIS: *Three Sermons*, pp. 58–61.

Other remarks, of a similar kind, by Dr. WALLIS, will be found quoted in the first Appendix to WHATELY'S "Elements of Logic," and seemingly approved by the archbishop.

Self-consciousness is not the formal reason of personality in the three divine persons. . . . . The divine persons are three relatives (or one simple being, or essence, under three distinct relations), and consequently differ from one another, not wholly and by all that is in them, but only by some certain mode or respect peculiar to each, and upon that account causing their distinction. . . . "Person" here imports only a relation, or mode of subsistence in conjunction with the nature it belongs to; and therefore a multiplication of persons, of itself, imports only a multiplication of such modes or relations, without any necessary multiplication of the nature itself to which they adhere; forasmuch as one and the same nature may sustain several distinct relations, or modes of subsistence. . . . . In God, besides essence or substance, we assert that there is that which we call mode, habitude, and relation; and, by one or other of these in conjunction with essence or substance, we give account of all the acts, attributes, and personalities belonging to the divine nature, or Godhead. . . . . A *mode* is properly a certain habitude of some being, essence, or thing, whereby the said essence or being is determined to some particular state or condition, which, barely of itself, it would not be determined to. And, according to this account of it, a mode in things spiritual and immaterial seems to have much the like reference to such kind of beings that a posture has to a body, to which it gives some difference or distinction, without superadding any new entity or being to it. In a word, a mode is not properly a being, either substance or accident, but a certain affection cleaving to it, and determining it from its common general nature and indifference to something more particular. . . . As, for instance, in created beings, dependence is a mode determining the general nature of being to that particular state or condition, by virtue whereof it proceeds from, and is supported by,

another; and the like may be said of mutability, presence, absence, inherence, adherence, and such like, viz., that they are not beings, but modes or affections of being, and inseparable from it so far that they can have no existence of their own, after a separation or division from the things or beings to which they do belong. . . . As every mode essentially includes in it the thing or being of which it is the mode, so every person of the blessed Trinity, by virtue of its proper mode of subsistence, includes in it the Godhead itself, and is properly the Godhead as subsisting with and under such a certain mode or relation. . . . The divine nature, subsisting under, and being determined by, such a certain mode, personally differs from itself, as subsisting under and determined by another; forasmuch as the divine nature, or Godhead, so subsisting and determined, is properly a person. . . . There is one, and but one, self-existing, infinite, eternal, &c., being, nature, or substance, which we call God. . . . This infinite, eternal, self-existent being or nature exists in, and is common to, three distinct persons, — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, — of which the Son eternally issues from the Father, by way of generation; and the Holy Ghost, jointly from both, by way of spiration: which three divine persons superadd to this divine nature, or Deity, three different modes of subsistence, founding so many different relations; each of them belonging to each person in a peculiar, uncommunicable manner; so that, by virtue thereof, each person respectively differs and stands distinguished from the other two; and yet, by reason of one and the same numerical divine nature or Godhead equally existing in and common to all the three persons, they are all but one and the same God, who is blessed for ever. . . . . If there be any distinction in God, or the Deity, it must be either from some distinct substance, or some accident, or some mode of being. . . . But it cannot be from any distinct substance, for that would make a manifest composition in the divine nature; nor yet from any accident, for that would make a worse composition: and therefore it follows that this distinction must unavoidably proceed from one or more distinct modes of being. — DR. ROBERT SOUTH: *Animadversions on Sherlock's Vindication*, pp. 91, 120–1, 217, 241–2, 246–7, 285.

According to him [to SABELLIUS], the whole Trinity is God revealed; but the Divine Being, as he is in and of himself, and in his simple unity, is God concealed or unrevealed. . . . . SABELLIUS admitted only three πρόσωπα [persons], because, as a Christian, he acknowledged only three ways in which God had specially revealed

himself; and these three he separated definitely from each other. . . . . It would seem that SABELLIUS maintained the Trinity to exist, as such, only in relation to the various methods and spheres of action belonging to the Godhead. In governing the world, in all its various operations on finite beings, the Godhead is *Father;* as redeeming, by special operations in the person of Christ and through him, it is *Son;* as sanctifying, and in all its operations on the community of believers, and as a Unity in the same, the Godhead is *Spirit.* — SCHLEIERMACHER, *as translated by Stuart in Biblical Repository for July*, 1835; vol. vi. pp. 61, 67, 70.

The sum of SCHLEIERMACHER'S opinion . . . is, that the Unity is God concealed, and the Trinity is God revealed. The Unity or Μονὰς, as he supposes, is God *in seipso*, i.e. simply and in and by himself considered, immutable, self-existent, eternal, and possessed of all possible perfection and excellence. But, as to the Trinity, the Father is God as revealed in the works of creation, providence, and legislation; the Son is God in human flesh, the divine Logos incarnate; the Holy Ghost is God the Sanctifier, who renovates the hearts of sinners, and dwells in the hearts of believers. The personality of the Godhead consists in these developments, made in time, and made to intelligent and rational beings. Strictly considered, personality is not in his view eternal; and, from the nature of the case, as thus viewed, it could not be, because it consists in developments of the Godhead to intelligent beings; and those developments could not be made before those beings had existence. — SCHLEIERMACHER'S *Sabellianism, as represented by Moses Stuart in Biblical Repository for April*, 1835; vol. v. pp. 316–17.

This has very much the appearance of a kind of Unitarianism, though to us it does not seem to resemble that either of the Old Testament or of the New. Stuart, however, regards SCHLEIERMACHER as a Trinitarian, and says (p. 268) that he can truly say he has "met with scarcely any writer, ancient or modern, who appears to have a deeper conviction of, or more hearty belief in, the doctrine of the real Godhead of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

What is personality? Is it essence or attribute? Not the first, one might answer; for essence in the Godhead is numerically one and the same. Not the second, in an essential and fundamental sense; because, as we have seen, all the attributes that are of this description belong to the one substance or essence of the Godhead. "But, if personality be neither substance nor attribute," some one may exclaim,

"then can it be any thing, or have any existence at all?" . . . It is possible that there may be in the Godhead some distinctions which do not consist in a difference of substance; and which, moreover, do not consist in the high and peculiar and exclusive attributes of that substance which constitute Godhead, but which are, as TURRETIN avers, *modal*; or they may be of such a nature that we have no language to describe them, and no present ability even to comprehend them if they could be described. . . . There may be distinctions in the Godhead that lie beyond all our present logical and metaphysical conception or power of definition; distinctions which are co-eternal with the Godhead itself, and which, though neither essence nor essential attribute in the highest sense, may still have an existence that is real and true. . . . . The full sense of the words Father, Son, and Spirit, can be made out only by reference to *God revealed*. But the distinction in the Godhead itself, in which this revelation has its basis, is eternal: the development of it was made in time. . . . Why should it ever have any more been overlooked, that the names Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are names that have a *relative* sense, — relative, I mean, to the developments of the Godhead as made in the economy of redemption, or as preparatory to it, — than that such names as Creator, Governer, Redeemer, Sanctifier, Most High, and others of the like kind, have, and from their very nature must have, a *relative* sense, *i.e.* a sense which connects itself with the developments of the Godhead in relation to creatures? — MOSES STUART, *in Biblical Repository for June*, 1835; vol. vi. pp. 90–1, 99, 100.

The only difference between SABELLIUS or SCHLEIERMACHER and STUART seems to be, that the former regarded the trinal distinctions in the Godhead — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — as having had a beginning; the latter, that they were eternal, and had their ground or foundation in the divine nature itself, in the same way as the attributes of creatorship and lordship; the development, however, of all these distinctions or qualities being equally made in time. But the fair inference to be drawn from either of these views is, that there is no more reason for calling God *three* persons or distinctions than for extending the number so as to comprehend *all* the relations which he bears to his creatures, as, for instance, those of Benefactor, Preserver, King, and Judge, as well as of Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

Thus we have three persons, or impersonations, all existing under finite conditions or conceptions. They are relatives, and, in that view, are not infinites; for relative infinites are impossible. And yet, taken representatively, they are, each and all, infinites; because they stand

for and express the infinite, absolute Jehovah. They may each declare, "I am He;" for what they impart to us of him is their true reality. . . . The Father plans, presides, and purposes for us; the Son expresses his intended mercy, proves it, brings it down even to the level of a fellow-feeling; the Spirit works within us the beauty he reveals, and the glory beheld in his life. . . . Each and all together dramatize and bring forth into life about us that Infinite One, who, to our mere thought, were no better than Brahma sleeping on eternity and the stars. . . . There is, then, a real and proper Trinity in the Scriptures; three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, — one God . . . . Do you ask whether I mean simply to assert a modal Trinity or three modal persons? I must answer obscurely. . . . If I say that they are modal *only*, as the word is commonly used, I may deny more than I am justified in denying, or am required to deny, by the ground I have taken. I will only say that the Trinity, or the three persons, are given to me for the sake of their external expression, not for the internal investigation of their contents. . . . Perhaps I shall come nearest to the simple, positive idea of the Trinity here maintained, if I call it an INSTRUMENTAL TRINITY, and the persons INSTRUMENTAL PERSONS. . . . In and through these living persons, or impersonations, I find the Infinite One brought down even to my own level of humanity, without any loss of his greatness, or reduction of his majesty. . . . I perceive, too, that God may as well offer himself to me in these persons, as through trees or storms or stars; that they involve as little contrariety, as few limitations, and yield as much more of warmth as they have more of life. . . . But some one, I suppose, will require of me to answer whether the three persons are eternal, or only occasional, and to be discontinued. Undoubtedly, the distinction of the Word, or the power of self-representation in God thus denominated, is eternal. And, in this, we have a permanent ground of possibility for the threefold impersonation called Trinity. Accordingly, if God has been eternally revealed, or revealing himself to created minds, it is likely always to have been, and always to be, as the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Consequently, it may always be in this manner that we shall get our impressions of God, and have our communion with him. . . . That which most discourages such a belief is the declaration of Paul, "When all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him that did put all things under him, that God may be all and in all." — DR. HORACE BUSHNELL: *God in Christ*, pp. 173–7.

REMARKS.

We must allow the divine persons to be real substantial beings, if we allow each person to be God, unless we will call any thing a God which has no real being, as that has not which has not a real nature and essence; whereas all men grant that there are no accidents or qualities or modes in God but a pure and simple essence, or pure act; and therefore the three divine persons are substantially distinct, though in one undivided substance. . . . . It is plain the schoolmen were no Sabellians. They did not think the three divine persons to be only three names of the same infinite being, but acknowledged each person to be really distinct from one another, and each of them to have the same numerical essence, and to be truly and properly God, and not to be three modes of the same infinite God, which is little better than three names of one God. . . . By these *modi subsistendi* [that the Father is of himself, or without any cause; that the Son is begotten of the Father; that the Holy Ghost proceeds from Father and Son] they did not mean, as some mistake them, that the three divine persons are three modes of the Deity, or only modally distinguished; for there are no modes, no more than there are qualities and accidents, in the Deity; much less can a mode be a God. To be sure, all men must grant that the Father is not a mode of the Deity, but essentially God, and yet he has his *modus subsistendi*, as well as the Son and the Holy Ghost; and no man can think that the Father begat only a *modus*, and called it his Son, whereas a son signifies a real person of the same nature, but distinct from his Father. — DR. WILLIAM SHERLOCK: *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, pp. 47, 83–4.

Though the Latin word *persona*, as you say, according to the true and ancient sense, may well enough admit to be so taken as that the same man might sustain three persons, I offer it to your reconsideration whether ever you have observed the word "hypostasis," in any sort of authors, when it signifies any person at all, . . . to be taken in that sense; and whether one hypostasis so taken, as it uses to be when it signifies a person, may not be capable of sustaining three of those persons which you here describe; and whether, according to this sense, you mean not God to be only one such hypostasis. Be pleased further hereupon to consider how well it agrees with this supposition of God's being but one hypostasis, or intelligent *suppositum*, so frequently to speak as the Holy Scriptures do of the Father, Son or Word, the Spirit or Holy Ghost, as three distinct *I's*

or *He*'s. . . . But the distinct predicates spoken of the three sacred persons in the Godhead seem much more to challenge a greater distinction of the persons than your notion of a person doth seem to admit; that of *sending*, and being *sent*, spoken so often of the first in reference to the second, and of the first and second in reference to the third, as not to need the quoting of places. If the same man were a king, a general, and a judge, methinks it would not well square with the usual forms of speaking among men (and God speaks to men as men) to say, that, as the first, he sends the two latter, that is, himself. . . . How the incarnation of the Son can be understood, according to your notion of *person*, without the Father's and Holy Ghost's incarnation also, I confess I cannot apprehend. Your notion of a person . . . seems to leave the Godhead to be but one hypostasis, or person in the latter sense. . . . Doth not this civil or merely respective notion of a person, the other being left, fall in with the Antitrinitarian? . . . And consider whether, by your notion of a person, you forsake not the generality of them who have gone, as to this point, under the repute of orthodox; who no doubt have understood, by three persons, three intelligent hypostases. . . . . Yourself acknowledge three somewhats in the Godhead distinct, or else they could not be three. I will not here urge, that, if they be three somewhats, they must be three things, not three nothings. — JOHN HOWE: *Letters to Dr. Wallis; in Works*, vol. ii. pp. 562–3, 566.

I have sometimes almost been led strongly to wish that the word ["person"] had never come into use among Christians; as it is a stranger, at least in the sense of modern usage, to the Scriptures. . . . Yet, after all the difficulties which lie in the way, I am not persuaded that the word can now be dismissed from our theological vocabulary. When the Father is represented as sending his Son into the world in order to redeem it, and the Son as saying, "Lo! I come, my God, to do thy will;" when God sends his Spirit, and pours out his Spirit; when *I, thou, he*, are employed with verbs, &c., designating purposes, actions, feelings, &c., of Father, Son, and Spirit; when we acknowledge that there are works or developments appropriate to each, — in what way are we to designate the distinctions which these things and modes of representation seem to imply, if not by the use of the word "person"? Let any one who acknowledges the fact of such distinctions make the effort to designate them conveniently, and yet avoid the use of the word "person," and he will find himself embarrassed. — MOSES STUART, *in Biblical Repository for July*, 1835; vol. vi. p. 98.

The preceding extract we have made from STUART as an answer to his own Sabellian views. It must indeed be embarrassing, if not impossible, for any one to employ language clearly involving the idea of distinct personality, consciousness, and agency, as that quoted here from Scripture in reference to God and Christ, without being reduced to the necessity of using terms less vague than "distinctions" or "relations," — without being compelled to use words unequivocally implying the conception or belief of more beings than one. We know of no advocate for the theory of trinal developments who is not forced, by the uniform tenor of the Christian Records, to speak of the Messiah as a being altogether distinct from his God and Father.

In these broad and bold assumptions [that God is strictly and simply one, but that he could not be sufficiently revealed without evolving a Trinity of persons, and that these personalities are the *dramatis personæ* of revelation] we have the germ of Dr. BUSHNELL'S theory. 1. It is assumed that God could not reveal himself without evolving a Trinity of persons. By what process has this been ascertained? and where the giant intellect that has so comprehended the essence of God, sweeping back to the very oneness of the Absolute before it invented the triform *dramatis personæ* that were to manifest it to men and to angels, and becoming cognizant of the vain effort of "God struggling to reveal himself"? But wherein consists the insuperable difficulty of manifestation in oneness of personality, — a difficulty so great that even the "struggling" "Absolute" could not surmount it? Is *one* less explicable than three? and if plurality be required, simply as a mean of manifestation, why may not *two* answer? or why may not *seven* be required? We have a twofold reason for the rejection of this theory, — first, its intrinsic absurdity; and, second, because it passes all the bounds of reason and knowledge, and claims a cognizance of the ontology of Jehovah before he has revealed himself, — claiming to know what he is, and what he can do. 2. Again: this theory resolves the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — persons revealed — into mere manifestations of the actions and feelings of the one Absolute. They are not God, but only factitious representations; false in fact, but true in design, — designed to "import God into knowledge." They are not God, but represent him; just as the actor is not Shakspeare, but only "imports" Shakspeare "into knowledge." The actor may develop fully the genius of Shakspeare; but, alas for the Absolute, with all his "strugglings"! even the Trinity fails to "import him into knowledge;" for these *dramatis personæ* are, after all, only "finite forms," and must therefore fail to represent "the Infinite." This Trinity, then, is also a Trinity of "forms," and not of

substance. Three shadows are bound together, and to the Trinity! — a God! — DR. D. W. CLARK, *in the Methodist Quarterly Review for January*, 1851; fourth series, vol. iii. pp. 136–7.

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§ 13. SUMMARY OF TRINITIES.

In the preceding pages of this chapter, we have given at some length the principal views of the doctrine of a Trinity, and particularly of that of a Trinity in Unity, which have been held by various sections and members of the Christian church; and have shown, by copious extracts from the writings of eminent Trinitarians, that all these representations of the Deity except that in the creed attributed to the apostles, and called by their name, are either vague, mystical, unintelligible, or irrational and unscriptural; that, in some of them, the language is so obscure or so abstract as to be altogether incomprehensible by the human understanding; that, in others, the propositions laid down are mutually contradictory and mutually destructive; and that, in all of them which are capable of being understood, the ideas involved are of a character totally different from that which appears in the formal profession of "three persons in one God," — namely, in representing the Deity as consisting either, — 1. Of only one supreme, underived, and infinite Intelligence, the Father; and the Son and Spirit, though partaking of the same nature with the Father, as dependent, finite, and inferior existences: 2. Of three self-existent and independent Minds or Beings, who, though harmonious in will, purpose, and action, are, and can be nothing less than, three equal Gods: or, 3. As merely one Person or Being, sustaining the three characters or relations of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; of Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

The same remarks will be found to apply to all the definitions which can be given of a Triune God, — that they are either unintelligible or absurd; either tritheistic or unipersonal; either indicating a real personal identity of God, Christ, and Spirit, that is at war with the whole tenor of the Jewish and Christian revelations, or necessarily implying a polytheism which Sacred Scripture rebukes, which right reason rejects, and which the very symbols and confessions that involve the absurdity dare not openly express. To corroborate the truth of our statement, we shall give an abstract of some of the terms which have been employed on this subject in venerated creeds and by eminent theologians, — a very imperfect list, indeed, but, in connection with the extracts already made, sufficiently copious to show the perversity and daringness of the human intellect in penetrating into the essence of the Unsearchable, — in diving into mysteries, of which nature and the Bible are silent, — in being unsatisfied with that simple and sublime declaration of Moses, which was reiterated by Jesus, and taught in various forms by prophets and apostles, that "JEHOVAH OUR GOD, JEHOVAH IS ONE."

In the following tables, we shall give the precise words of the authors referred to, unless where, for the sake of room, abridgment is necessary.

SYNONYMES, DEFINITIONS, AND DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PHRASE, "THREE PERSONS" IN THE ONE GODHEAD.

Three substances	Hilary, apud Calvin's Instit
Three independent and co-ordinate individuals, as Peter, Paul, and John	Gregory Nyssen and Cyril of Alex., apud Cudworth.
Three numerically distinct natures or subsistences, all perfectly alike	Ascusnage and Philoponus, apud Murdock's Mosheim.
Three things distinct from each other, as three men	Roscelin, apud Stillingfleet.
Tres nescio quid [Three I know not what]	Anselm, apud Dr. Hampden.
Tres proprietates per se subsistentes	Wirtemberg Confession.
Three subsistences, each disting. by a peculiar property	Calvin: Inst. bk. i. c. xiii. 6.
Three distinct individuals	Generrard, ap. Stillingfleet.
The substantial beings to whom we stand related, &c.	Barrow: Works, vol. ii. p.149.
Three persons . . . equally infinite in every perfection	Same, vol. ii. p. 150.
Three divine hypostases	H. More: Myst. of Godl. bk. i.
Three essences; our Creators and Governors	Same, book i. chap. iv. 3, 4.
A Trinity of essentialities or active principles	Baxter: Wks. vol. xxi. p. 308.
A Trin. of divine primalities, principles, & perfections	Same, vol. xxi. p. 312.
A Trinity of divine hypostases or subsistences	Cudworth: In. S. vol. i. p.725.
All other beings, besides this Holy Trinity, are finite	Same, vol. i. p. 737.
Three differences. . . The Scripture everywhere speaks of them as we use to do of three distinct persons	Tillotson: Sermon 44.
Three distinct persons; three distinct subsistences	Stillingfleet: Vin. pp. 56, 75.
A person is a complete intelligent substance, with a peculiar manner of subsistence	Same, p. 261.
Three divine persons in a sense metaphorical	Wallis: Three Ser. pp. 58–61.
God distinguished according to three considerations	Same.
Three somewhats	Same.
Uncreated beings	Evelyn: True R. vol. i. p. 131.
A trinal distinction, or three persons truly distinct	Howe: Works, vol. ii. p. 565
Three distinct intelligent hypostases	Same, vol. ii. p. 568.
Three intelligent natures; intellectual subsistences	Same, vol. ii. pp. 583, 592.
Three spiritual or intelligent beings	Same, vol. ii. p. 598.
Real substantial beings	Wm. Sherlock: Vindic. p. 47.
Three distinct infinite minds	Same, pp. 51, 66.
Three substantial acts; three divine subsisting persons	Same, p. 130.
Three infinite distinct minds and substances	Bingham, apud Chambers.
Three really distinct hypostases or persons	Bull: Life by Nelson, p. 316.
Distinct beings or persons, according to the proper signification of this word, from each other	Bishop Fowler: Propos. p. 8.
Three relatives, or one simple being or essence under three distinct relations; three distinct modalities	South: Animad. pp. 120, 160.
Three different modes of subsistence	Same, p. 247.
Several, particular, intelligent substances	Leibnitz, apud Stuart's Misc
Relative and incommunicable modes of subsisting	Same.
Substantial relations	Same.
Three different titles or characters	Gastrell, apud Huntingford.
All three, . . . authors of our salvation	Same.
Three real persons; a real Father, Son, and H. Ghost	Waterland: Vin. pp. 20, 336
Each divine person is an individual intelligent agent	Same, p. 350.

The different relations supported by the same person,	[pp. 169, 185.
intelligent agent, or conscious being	DODDRIDGE: Lectures, vol. ii.
Three benefactors	EDW. YOUNG: Let. IV. part 2.
Three beings	SOAME JENYNS: View, p. 141.
The authors of every blessing	WM. JONES: Cath. Doct. p. 6.
Three distinct agents; Creators, masters, &c. . . .	Same, chaps. iii. 8, and iv.
Each person by himself is God	HORSLEY: Tracts, p. 262.
But these persons are all included in the very idea of	
a God	Same.
Equal in all the attributes of the divine nature . .	Same, p. 263.
Three distinct independent powers; three substances	TOELLNER, apud Flatt.
Three distinct subjects; three equal subjects . . .	KNAPP: Ch. Theol. sect. xliv.
Three persons [who] direct their energies to effectuate	HUNTINGFORD: Thoughts, p. 99
Three divine intelligences	Same, p. 17.
Holy Gods; Creators	Same, p. 23.
Three distinct objects: . . each has real subsistence .	Same, pp. 27-8.
Three distinct subsistences or persons	WARDLAW: Soc. Con. pp. 40, 62
That which can contrive, which can design, is a person	Same, p. 330.
"Person" and "intelligent agent" are synonymous.	Same, p. 334.
Three intelligent & active subjects, which we may call	
hypostases, subsistences, subsistents, or persons .	J. P. SMITH: Scr. Test. vol. ii.
The Holy Spirit, a real, intelligent, personal, divine	[App. IV
agent, distinct from the Father and the Son . .	Same, Appendix III.
Relations	ARNOLD, in Life and Cor. p. 52.
A threefold manifestation to mankind of the one God	WHATELY: Sermons, p. 200.
Characters standing in three relations to us	Same, p. 203.
Manifestations of the Godhead	MILMAN: H. of Ch. vol. ii. p. 425.
Distinct and separate beings	Same, vol. ii. p. 431.
Three distinct subsistences; Creators	HOPKINS: Works, vol. i. p. 62.
Three divine beings or persons	DWIGHT, Ser. 71, near end.
Not three infinite beings	Same, Ser. 39, in vol. ii. p. 8.
The meaning of the word "person" I do not know .	Same, p. 9.
The Holy Ghost a divine person; a percipient being .	Same, pp. 371-2.
The Holy Ghost a living agent	Same, p. 375.
All the attributes and actions of a person are ascribed	
to the Holy Spirit [the third person in the Trinity]	Same, p. 373.
Three distinct agents	EMMONS: Wks. vol. iv. p. 107
Three equally distinct and divine persons	Same, vol. iv. p. 118.
A threefold distinction; real distinctions	STUART: Miscel. pp. 28, 40.
The Logos is really and verily divine, self-existent, un-	
caused, and immutable in himself	Same, as quoted by Miller.
Equal agents in works of creation, providence, &c. .	MILLER: Letters on the Eter
Three persons, partaking equally and without limit, of	[Sonship, pp. 51-2.
the essential predicates of Div., as self-existence .	Same, p. 272.
We cannot say that each person possesses in himself	
complete, separate, and independent Divinity . .	Same, p. 107.
A threefold personality or impersonation of God . .	BUSHNELL: God in Christ, pp.
A threefold denomination of God	Same, p. 167. [147-8.
Three impersonations existing under finite conditions	Same, p. 173.
Ineffable personal distinctions	POND: Review of Bushnell.
A threefold distinction, out of which arises a threefold	
manifestation to man	HAVEN, in New Eng for 1850.

TITLES, ATTRIBUTES, AND FUNCTIONS OF THE THREE PERSONS IN THE GODHEAD.

First Person.	*Second Person.*	*Third Person.*	*Authorities.*
The Father	The Son	The Holy Ghost	All Trinitarians.
Eternal; almighty; unbegotten	Eternal; almighty; begotten	Eternal; almighty; proceeding	Athanasian Creed (so called).
God the Father, who hath made me	God the Son, who redeemed me	God the H. Gh., who sanctifieth me	Church-of-England Catechism.
His essence self-existent	His essence self-existent	His essence self-existent	Calvin: Inst. book i. ch. xiii. 19, 25.
Alone originally God	God by being of God	Eternally proceeding fr. the F. & S.	Hooker: Ec. Pol b. v. c. liv. 2, lii. 1.
The Father as Goodness	The Son as Wisdom	The Holy G. as Power — all concur	Same, book v. chap. lvi. 5.
A being who knew and loved himself from eternity	God's understanding	God's affection	Grotius and Philip Nye, as given by Knapp in Chris. Theol. sect. xliv.
Received his essence or subsistence from no other person	His Godhead communicated from the Father	His Godhead communicated by the Father and the Son	Pearson on the Creed, Art. I. & VIII. pp. 48, 452.
The Father decreeth	The Son disposeth	The Holy Ghost doth execute	Barrow: Works, vol. ii. p. 544.
First of all, he being from none	Not God in this signification	Not God in this signification	Hen. More: Myst. of Godl. b. ix. c. ii.
Omnipotence or Power	Wisdom or Intellect	Goodness or Will	Baxter: Pr. Works, vol. xxi. p. 309.
The Fountain of the Deity	All divine properties except one	All divine properties except one	Tillotson: Ser. 44, Wks. vol. i. p 215.
Original Mind and Wisdom	The Word and Wisdom of the Fa.; *i.e.* the reflex knowl. of himself	That Divine Love which Father and Son have for each other	Wm. Sherlock: Vindic. of the Doct. of the Trinity, p. 130.
One perfect God of himself	One perfect God of himself	One perfect God of himself	Beveridge: Pr. Thoughts, Art. III.
God from himself	His Divinity derived	His Divinity derived	Bull, in his writings *passim*.
Underived and independent	Underived and independent	Underived and independent	Ridgley: Body of Div. vol. i. p. 263.
The divine nature thinking in one particular way	The divine nature thinking in another different way	The divine nature thinking in another different way	Le Clerc, apud Flatt, in Bib. Repert. new series, vol. i. pp. 172–8.
The Father originates	The Son executes	The Spirit applies	Robert Hall: Works, vol. i. p. 378.
The being of God, in himself consid.	God's being in Christ	God's being in the Christ. church	Schleiermacher, as given by Knapp.
The distinctive title of the Fath., as the Supreme Will, is the Good	That of the only-begotten S., as the Supreme Reason, is the True	Proceeding from the Good through the True, is the Wisdom	Coleridge: Lit. Remains, in Works, vol. v. p. 94.
The I, — the Subject	Thou, — the Object; the image of the Deity	The Union of the Father and the Son	Tholuck: Theol. Encyc. in Biblioth. Sacra, vol. i. p. 565.
Sends the Son	Acts in subordination to the Father	Acts in subord. to the Son and Fa.	Emmons: Works, vol. iv. p. 109.
The Father plans, presides, &c.	The Son expresses	The Spirit works within us	Bushnell: God in Christ, p. 173.

§ 14. The Apostolic or Unitarian Trinity (*resumed*).

As a brief escape from the labyrinth of darknesses and contradictions in which we have been groping, we would again advert to the simple and more scriptural Trinity mentioned in pp. 260–2, and, with the liberal writers whom we quote, breathe an atmosphere of a purer and a more sacred kind.

He that goes about to speak of and to understand the mysterious Trinity, and does it by words and names of man's invention, or by such which signify contingently, if he reckons this mystery by the mythology of numbers, by the cabala of letters, by the distinctions of the school, and by the weak inventions of disputing people; if he only talks of essences and existences, hypostases and personalities, distinctions without difference, and priority in co-equalities, and unity in pluralities, and of superior predicates of no larger extent than the inferior subjects, — he may amuse himself, and find his understanding will be like St. Peter's upon the mount of Tabor at the transfiguration; he may build three tabernacles in his head, and talk something, but he knows not what. But the good man that feels the "power of the Father," and he to whom "the Son" is become "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" he in "whose heart the love of the Spirit of God is spread;" to whom God hath communicated the "Holy Ghost, the Comforter," — this man, though he understands nothing of that which is unintelligible, yet he only understands the mysteriousness of the holy Trinity. — Jeremy Taylor: *Via Intelligentiæ; in Works*, vol. vi. pp. 402–3.

Let it be remarked, that apostolic Trinitarian doctrine — so utterly unlike the crabbed definitions of a wrangling and unevangelic age — brings the inscrutable mystery of the divine nature to bear immediately upon the affections, under an aspect of pleasurable emotion. How little has this been regarded by angry disputants! How grievously have those misunderstood apostolic orthodoxy who have pursued each other to the death, because not consenting to the same jargon as themselves! We cannot too attentively regard the apostolic method of teaching this great truth, — of shedding it into the heart. Our creed, if derived from the Scriptures, speaks to us of "the *grace* of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the *love* of God, and of the *communion* of the Holy Ghost." This is the orthodoxy which, when cordially entertained, impels Christians to love each other and all men, and to abound in good works, at sacrifices and offerings, with which "God is well pleased." — Isaac Taylor: *Lect. on Spir. Christianity*, p. 173.

The author of these catholic and Christian views unquestionably means to speak of the "apostolic Trinitarian doctrine," not only in contrast with an orthodoxy, which, while wrangling in unintelligible terms about evangelic faith, is found wanting in the first duties of morality, but also in opposition to Unitarianism. There is, however, no Unitarian who would not cordially admit the apostle Paul's method of teaching Trinitarianism, here recommended; a Trinitarianism which, speaking of Christ, God, and his spirit, restricts the usual name of the Deity to *one* being or person, in connection with the spiritual benefits of the gospel.

Both John and Paul place the essence of Christian theism in worshipping God as the Father through the Son, in the communion of the divine life which he has established, or in the communion of the Holy Spirit, the Father through the Son dwelling in mankind, animated by his Spirit, agreeably to the triad of the Pauline benediction, — the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. xiii. 14); and this is the basis of the doctrine of the Trinity in the connection of Christian experience. It has an essentially practical and historical significance and foundation: it is the doctrine of God revealed in humanity, which teaches men to recognize in God not only the original Source of existence, but also of salvation and sanctification. — NEANDER: *History of the Planting and Training of the Christian Church*, vol. ii. p. 56.

We quote the remainder of our author's paragraph, which, though exhibiting his approval of the full development of the Triune doctrine, — or rather, as we should express it, of a gradual change from Theism to Tritheism, — shows at the same time that that development, or that change, was the product, not of "revelation," but of a prying and a diseased intellect: "From this Trinity of revelation, as far as the divine causality images itself in the same, the reflective mind, according to the analogy of its own being, pursuing this track, seeks to elevate itself to the idea of an original Triad in God, availing itself of the intimations which are contained in John's doctrine of the Logos, and the cognate elements of the Pauline theology." — Had the monotheistic Trinity of Paul and John, so well depicted by NEANDER, been the only Trinity that had prevailed in the church of Christ, what an amount of logomachy, of error, of strife, and of persecution, would have been avoided! But, unhappily for the interests of Christian truth and love, the professed disciples of Jesus, not content with the practical simplicity of the gospel, sought to "elevate" their minds "to the idea of an *original* Triad in God," by "availing" themselves of the supposed "intimations which are contained" in the writings of Paul and John, and by blending them with the reveries of heathen philosophers, and the tendencies of the people to give a false direction to their feelings of reverence for moral and spiritual worth.

SECT. II. — THE DOCTRINE OF A TRIUNE GOD INCOMPREHENSIBLE AND IRRATIONAL.

I am well assured, that God, who made our faculties, will never offer any thing to us to believe that upon close debate does plainly contradict them. — HENRY MORE.

§ 1. THIS DOGMA, NO LESS THAN TRANSUBSTANTIATION, OPPOSED TO COMMON SENSE.

Indeed, that Transubstantiation is openly and violently against natural reason is no argument to make them disbelieve it who believe the mystery of the Trinity in all those niceties of explication which are in the school (and which now-a-days pass for the doctrine of the church), with as much violence to the principles of natural and supernatural philosophy as can be imagined to be in the point of Transubstantiation. — JEREMY TAYLOR: *Liberty of Prophesying*, sect. xx. 16.

On another passage, of a similar character, in JEREMY TAYLOR'S works, COLERIDGE, in his "Literary Remains" (Works, vol. v. p. 229), says, "It is most dangerous, and, in its distant consequences, subversive of all Christianity, to admit, as TAYLOR does, that the doctrine of the Trinity is at all against, or even above, human reason in any other sense than as eternity and Deity itself are above it." Undoubtedly, the prelate's admission would be "subversive of all Christianity," if a Trinity of co-equal persons in one God were proved to be a Christian doctrine; but this, in our opinion, never has been, and never will be, proved.

I was half converted to Transubstantiation by TILLOTSON'S common senses against it; seeing clearly that the same grounds, *totidem verbis et syllabis*, would serve the Socinian against all the mysteries of Christianity. — S. T. COLERIDGE: *Lit. Remains; Works*, vol. v. p. 333.

But, my brethren, as I before hinted, are we safe in at all admitting this principle of contradiction to the law of nature, of apparent violation of philosophical principles, as a means of interpreting Scripture? What, I will ask, becomes of all mystery? . . . What becomes of that very mystery which we observed FABER put in a parallel with that of Transubstantiation when he commented upon this argument? What becomes of the Trinity? What becomes of the incarnation of our Saviour? What of his birth from a virgin? — and, in short, what of every mystery of the Christian religion? Who will pretend to say, that he can, by any stretch of his imagination or of his reason, see

how, by possibility, three persons in one God can be but one Godhead? If the contradiction, the apparent contradiction, to the laws of nature, is so easily received, without being understood by us here, is it to be a principle for rejecting another doctrine as clearly laid down in Scripture? and if the doctrine of the Eucharist, which is even more plainly expressed than it, is to be rejected on such a ground, how is it possible for one moment to retain the other? Its very idea appears, at first sight, repugnant to every law of number; and no philosophical, mathematical, or speculative reasoning will ever show *how* it possibly can be. You are content, therefore, to receive this important dogma, shutting your eyes, as you should do, to its incomprehensibility: you are content to believe it, because the revelation of it from God was confirmed by the authority of antiquity; and therefore, if you wish not to be assailed on it by the same form of reasoning and arguments as you use against us, you must renounce this method, and, simply because it comes by revelation from God, receive the real presence at once, in spite of the apparent contradiction to the senses; for He hath revealed it who hath the words of eternal life. — CARDINAL WISEMAN: *Lectures on the Doctrines of the Catholic Church*, vol. ii. pp. 171–2.

§ 2. THE DOGMA OF A TRIUNE GOD UTTERLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE, AND REPUGNANT TO REASON.

1. A Christian is one that believes things his reason cannot comprehend. . . . 2. He believes three to be one, and one to be three; a Father not to be elder than his Son; a Son to be equal with his Father; and one proceeding from both to be equal with both; he believing three persons in one nature, and two natures in one person. 3. He believes a virgin to be a mother of a son, and that very son of hers to be her Maker. He believes Him to have been shut up in a narrow room whom heaven and earth could not contain. He believes Him to have been born in time who was and is from everlasting. He believes Him to have been a weak child, carried in arms, who is the Almighty; and Him once to have died who only hath life and immortality in himself. — LORD BACON: *Works*, vol. ii. p. 410.

The whole article consists of thirty-four "Christian Paradoxes," so strangely expressed as to have given rise to the suspicion that they are not the genuine production of Lord BACON, and may have been written for the purpose of deriding a belief in Christianity. But there is no doubt, that, however absurd they may appear when compared with the dictates of

reason or with the teachings of the New Testament, the sentiments quoted above are quite Trinitarian in their character; and it is undeniable that BACON himself was a Trinitarian, and, with all his greatness, not entirely free from the errors of the age in which he lived. These "Paradoxes" have been esteemed so orthodox, and so full of "godly truths," that, about the middle of the last century, they were several times republished in London as a penny tract, with a Preface by a clergyman of the name of F. Green, for the use of "the poorer sort of Christians." See note in Bacon's Works, vol. ii. p. 401.

That the great philosopher to whom we have referred was capable of penning such contradictions, is confirmed by the following remark from his *De Aug. Scient.*, lib. ix., as quoted by Mr. Yates in Vindication of Unitarianism, p. 278, fourth edition: "The more absurd and incredible any divine mystery is, the greater honor we do to God in believing it, and so much the more noble the victory of faith." Well may Papists, in their defences of Transubstantiation, triumph over Protestants who adopt such principles.

This is the great mystery, Three and One, and One and Three. Men and angels were made for this spectacle: we cannot comprehend it, and therefore must admire it. *O luminosissimæ Tenebræ!* Light darkness. . . . They were the more Three because One, and the more One because Three. Were there nothing to draw us to desire to be dissolved but this, it were enough. — DR. THOMAS MANTON: *Sermons* on John xvii.; vol. ii. p. 307.

That there is one divine nature or essence, common unto three persons incomprehensibly united, and ineffably distinguished; united in essential attributes, distinguished by peculiar idioms and relations; all equally infinite in every divine perfection, each different from other in order and manner of subsistence; that there is a mutual inexistence of one in all, and all in one; a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the communicant; an eternal generation and an eternal procession, without precedence or succession, without proper causality or dependence; a Father imparting his own, and the Son receiving his Father's, life, and a Spirit issuing from both, without any division or multiplication of essence, — these are notions which may well puzzle our reason in conceiving how they agree, but should not stagger our faith in assenting that they are true; upon which we should meditate, not with hope to comprehend, but with dispositions to admire, veiling our faces in the presence, and prostrating our reason at the feet, of wisdom so far transcending us. — DR. ISAAC BARROW: *Defence of the Blessed Trinity; in Works*, vol. ii. p. 150.

Methinks there be not impossibilities enough in religion for an active faith: the deepest mysteries ours contains have not only been

illustrated, but maintained, by syllogism and the rule of reason. I love to lose myself in a mystery, — to pursue my reason to an *O altitudo!* 'Tis my solitary recreation to pose my apprehension with those involved enigmas and riddles of the Trinity, incarnation, and resurrection. I can answer all the objections of Satan and my rebellious reason with that odd resolution I learned of TERTULLIAN, "Certum est quia impossibile est" [It is certain because impossible]. I desire to exercise my faith in the difficultest point; for to credit ordinary and visible objects is not faith, but persuasion. . . . This, I think, is no vulgar part of faith, to believe a thing not only above, but contrary to, reason, and against the arguments of our proper senses. . . . There is no attribute that adds more difficulty to the mystery of the Trinity, where, though in a relative way of Father and Son, we must deny a priority. — SIR THOMAS BROWNE: *Religio Medici*, sects. 9, 10, 12; *in Works*, vol. ii. pp. 332, 334–5.

Referring to the "Ultrafidianism" of this learned physician, as COLERIDGE expresses it, Archbishop TILLOTSON, in Ser. 194 (Works, vol. x. 180), makes the following very sensible remark: "I know not what some men may find in themselves; but I must freely acknowledge that I could never yet attain to that bold and hardy degree of faith as to believe any thing for this reason, because it was impossible."

I ever did, and ever shall, look upon those apprehensions of God to be the truest, whereby we apprehend him to be the most incomprehensible, and that to be the most true of God which seems most impossible unto us. Upon this ground, therefore, it is that the mysteries of the gospel, which I am less able to conceive, I think myself the more obliged to believe; especially this mystery of mysteries, the Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, which I am so far from being able to comprehend, or indeed to apprehend, that I cannot set myself seriously to think of it, or to screw up my thoughts a little concerning it, but I immediately lose myself as in a trance or ecstasy. That God the Father should be one perfect God of himself, God the Son one perfect God of himself, and God the Holy Ghost one perfect God of himself; and yet that these three should be but one perfect God of himself, so that one should be perfectly three, and three perfectly one; that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost should be three, and yet but one; but one, and yet three, — oh heart-amazing, thought-devouring, unconceivable mystery! Who cannot believe it to be true of the glorious Deity? — BISHOP BEVERIDGE: *Private Thoughts on Religion*, Art. III. pp. 52–3.

For that any one should be both Father and Son to the same person [to David], produce himself, be cause and effect too, and so the copy give being to its original, seems at first sight so very strange and unaccountable, that, were it not to be adored as a mystery, it would be exploded as a contradiction. — DR. R. SOUTH: *Sermons*, vol. iii. p. 240.

The doctrine of the Communication of Properties is as intelligible as if one were to say that there is a circle which is so united with a triangle, that the circle has the properties of the triangle, and the triangle those of the circle. — LE CLERC, *apud Rev. J. H. Thom.*

The revelation of it [the blessed Trinity] is, . . . I conceive, an absolute demonstration of its truth; because it is a mystery which by nature could not possibly have entered into the imagination of man. . . . Faith in these [mysteries] is more acceptable to God than faith in less abstruse articles of our religion, because it pays that honor which is due to his testimony; and the more seemingly incredible the matter is which we believe, the more respect we show to the relater of it.— DR. EDW. YOUNG: *Letter on Infidelity; Works*, vol. ii. p. 14.

Objections have likewise been raised to the divine authority of this religion from the incredibility of some of its doctrines, particularly of those concerning the Trinity, and atonement for sin by the sufferings and death of Christ; the one contradicting all the principles of human reason, and the other all our ideas of divine justice. . . . That three Beings should be one Being, is a proposition which certainly contradicts reason, that is, *our* reason; but it does not from thence follow, that it cannot be true; for there are many propositions which contradict our reason, and yet are demonstrably true. — SOAME JENYNS: *View of the Internal Evidence of the Christ. Religion*, pp. 134–5.

If, as we believe, a Triune God and other kindred doctrines were not taught by Jesus and his apostles, one of the strongest arguments for the rejection of Christianity would be annihilated; and our holy religion, when found to be perfectly compatible with the highest reason, would draw the respect, if not the unqualified assent and submission, of every thoughtful and inquiring mind.

In this awfully stupendous manner, at which Reason stands aghast, and Faith herself is half confounded, was the grace of God to man at length manifested. — BISHOP HURD: *Sermons preached at Lincoln's Inn*, vol. ii. (Sermon 17), p. 287.

Bishop HURD here refers to the incarnation of what he calls "the second person in the glorious Trinity," and to the atonement made by him.

When it is proposed to me to affirm, that "in the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," — I have difficulty enough! my understanding is involved in perplexity, my conceptions bewildered in the thickest darkness. I pause, I hesitate; I ask what necessity there is for making such a declaration. . . . But does not this confound all our conceptions, and make us use words without meaning? I think it does. I profess and proclaim my confusion in the most unequivocal manner: I make it an essential part of my declaration. Did I pretend to understand what I say, I might be a Tritheist or an Infidel; but I could not both worship the one true God, and acknowledge Jesus Christ to be Lord of all. . . . It might tend to promote moderation, and, in the end, agreement, if we were industrious on all occasions to represent our own doctrine [respecting the Trinity] as wholly unintelligible. — DR. JOHN HEY: *Lectures in Divinity*, vol. ii. pp. 249, 251, 253.

"Theology teaches," says a passage in a Protestant work, "that there is in God one Essence, two Processions, three Persons, four Relations, five Notions, and the Circumincession, which the Greeks call Perichoresis." . . . . What follows is still more to my purpose; but I cannot bring myself to transcribe any further. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Elements of Logic*; Append. I., Art. "Person."

My belief in the Trinity is based on the authority of the church: no other authority is sufficient. I will now show from reason, that the Athanasian Creed and Scripture are opposed to one another. The doctrine of the Trinity is this: There is one God in three persons, — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. Mind, the Father is one person, the Son is another person, and the Holy Ghost is another person. Now, according to every principle of mathematics, arithmetic, human wisdom, and policy, there must be three Gods; for no one could say that there are three persons and three Gods, and yet only one God. . . . The Athanasian Creed gives the universal opinion of the church, that the Father is uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Ghost uncreated; that they existed from all eternity. Now, the Son was born of the Father, and, if born, must have been created. The Holy Ghost must also have been created, as he came from the Father and the Son. And, if so, there must have been a time when they did not exist. If they did not exist, they must have been created; and therefore to assert that they are eternal is absurd, and bangs nonsense.

Each has his distinct personality: each has his own essence. How, then, can they be one Eternal? How can they be all God? Absurd. The Athanasian Creed says that they are three persons, and still only one God. Absurd; extravagant! This is rejected by Arians, Socinians, Presbyterians, and every man following human reason. The Creed further says that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and of man, "not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God." Now, I ask you, did the Divinity absorb the manhood? He could not be, at the same time, one person and two persons. I have now proved the Trinity opposed to human reason. — JAMES HUGHES, Roman Catholic Priest, of Newport Pratt. county Mayo; *apud Bible Christian for January*, 1839.

It would be an ungrateful task to collect, and to present to the reader, other definitions and descriptions of the dogma of a Triune God, and other admissions of its unintelligibility or its contradictions; for, so far as we can judge, they are all more or less obscure, inconsistent, or absurd. Enough, then, of such jargon; enough of a confusion which could not well be "worse confounded," — of "a counsel darkened by words without" the faintest ray of "knowledge." Let those who choose, "pose their apprehension with the involved enigmas and riddles of the Trinity, and the Incarnation" of a "God the Son;" let those who will, "honor," or as we would say *dis*honor, the bounteous Author of their intellect by believing, if they can believe, what is "absurd and incredible;" let them *reason*, or rather abuse their rational faculties by arguing, in favor of the propriety and the duty of "prostrating their understandings" before dogmas which are "impossible;" let one, speaking of "the mystery of mysteries, the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity," exclaim, in the language of superlative nonsense, *O luminosissima Tenebræ!* and another acknowledge that at the scheme of redemption, of which this is deemed an essential part, "Reason stands aghast, and Faith herself is half confounded." But for us, sickened by such representations and such confessions, — for us, with a Bible in our hands which says nought of divine pluralities, of holy trinities, of ineffable generations and processions, of tripersonal modes and developments; of distinct hypostases, persons, or subsistences; of infinite minds, spirits, or beings; of triune substances, essences, or natures; of perichoreses, circum incessions, or inexistences and permeations, — for us, when it is contrasted with the daring speculations of Platonic and Christian Trinitarians, there is a sacred and an inexpressible charm in one plain, simple precept, or in one clear and heavenly aspiration, from the lips of the great Master, "When ye pray, say, OUR FATHER, hallowed be *thy* name;" "Father, . . . this is life eternal, that they might know THEE THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and *Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;*" or in one out of the many explicit statements of Paul's belief, "There is ONE GOD, and *one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*"

SECT. III. — THEOLOGICAL TERMS EITHER UNINTELLIGIBLE AND USELESS, IF NOT PERNICIOUS; OR EXPRESSIVE OF IDEAS, AND SHOULD THEREFORE BE CLEARLY DEFINED.

What is not intelligible is either untrue or useless. — BUNSEN.

I wonder most, that men, when they have amused and puzzled themselves and others with hard words, should call this explaining things. — TILLOTSON.

The purity of Scripture ought to be preserved, and man should not presume to speak in his own language more perfectly than God spoke in his. . . . Who understands things belonging to God better than God himself? Let wretched mortals give honor to God, and either confess that they do not understand his words, or cease to profane them with their own new and peculiar expressions; so that divine wisdom, lovely in its genuine form, may remain to us pure. — MARTIN LUTHER: *Confut. Rat. Latom.*, tom. ii. fol. 240.

In these remarks, the great German Reformer, taking for granted the plenary inspiration of the Bible, refers in particular to the term *homoousion*, "consubstantial," the introduction of which into the nomenclature of Christian theology has been productive of so much evil.

St. Paul left an excellent precept to the church to avoid *profanas vocum novitates*, "the profane newness of words;" that is, it is fit that the mysteries revealed in Scripture should be preached and taught in the words of the Scripture, and with that simplicity, openness, easiness, and candor, and not with new and unhallowed words, such as that of "Transubstantiation." — JEREMY TAYLOR: *A Dissuasive from Popery*, part ii. book ii. § 3.

Referring to this passage in his "Notes" (Works, vol. v. p. 244), COLERIDGE asks, "Are not, then, Trinity, Triunity, Hypostasis, Perichoresis, Diphysis, and others, excluded?" — a question which we would venture to answer, by asserting that no injury would have been done to the gospel, if unscriptural terms had never been adopted in the formulas of the church.

Great difficulty, I acknowledge, there is in the explication of it [the doctrine of the Trinity], in which the farther we go beyond what God has thought fit to reveal to us in Scripture concerning it, the more we are entangled; and that which men are pleased to call an explaining of it, does, in my apprehension, often make it more obscure, that is, less plain than it was before; which does not so very well agree

with a pretence of explication. . . . . It cannot be denied but that these speculative and very acute men [the schoolmen], who wrought a great part of their divinity out of their own brains, as spiders do cobwebs out of their own bowels, have started a thousand subtleties about this mystery, such as no Christian is bound to trouble his head withal; much less is it necessary for him to understand those niceties which we may reasonably presume that they who talk of them did themselves never thoroughly understand, and least of all is it necessary to believe them. . . . . A man may be "a barbarian" that speaks to people in unknown phrases and metaphors, as well as "he that speaks in an unknown tongue;" and the very same reason that obligeth us to put the Scripture into a known language doth oblige men to explain the doctrines contained in it by such phrases and metaphors as are known and used in that language. . . . If men would but content themselves with those plain and simple descriptions which the Scripture gives us of faith, there could not be any great difference about it. — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermons* 44, 48; *in Works*, vol. iii. pp. 215, 288, and vol. xi. p. 259.

"Essence" and "hypostasis," "substance," "subsistence," "person," "existence," "nature," &c., are terms very differently used by Greek and Latin fathers in this dispute, and have very much obscured this doctrine, instead of explaining it. — DR. WILLIAM SHERLOCK: *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, sect. v. p. 101.

We can believe a thing no further than we understand the terms in which it is proposed to us; for faith concerns only the truth and falsehood of propositions, and the terms of which a proposition consists must be first understood before we can pronounce any thing concerning the truth or falsehood of it; which is nothing else but the agreement or disagreement of its terms, or the ideas expressed by them. If I have no knowledge at all of the meaning of the terms used in a proposition, I cannot exercise any act of my understanding about it; I cannot say I believe or disbelieve any thing; . . . and if I have but a general, confused notion of the terms, I can only give a general, confused assent to the proposition. . . . . From whence it follows, that terms and simple ideas must be clearly and distinctly understood first, before we can believe any thing particular of the respects and relations they bear to one another, which is the only proper object of faith. . . . . Whatever words we use, whether "person," "hypostasis," or any other we can invent, they all signify the same thing; that is, some kind of distinction we do not under-

stand. And we may rack our thoughts, tire our imaginations, and break all the fibres of our brain, and yet never be able to deliver ourselves clearer. — DR. ROBERT SOUTH: *Considerations concerning the Trinity*, pp. 14–16, 33–4.

Indeed, let any proposition be delivered to us as coming from God or from man, we can believe it no farther than we understand it; and therefore, if we do not understand it at all, we cannot believe it at all, — I mean, explicitly, — but only be persuaded that it contains some truth or other, though we know not what. Again: were any doctrine laid down which we clearly saw to be self-contradictory, or otherwise absurd, that could never be an object of our faith; for there is no possibility of admitting, upon any authority, a thing for true which we evidently perceive to be false. Nor would calling such doctrines "mysterious" mend the matter in the least. For, indeed, there is no mystery in them: they are as plain as any in nature, as plainly contrary to truth as any thing else is agreeable to it. — ARCHBISHOP SECKER: *Sermons*, No. XVIII. vol. iv. p. 384.

Several of the early disputes . . . took their rise from the affectation of employing high-sounding titles. Hence, in a great measure, the noise that was raised about the terms ὁμοούσιος, ὁμοιούσιος, ὑπόστασις, ὑποστατικὸς, θεοτόκος, Χριστοτόκος, when first introduced into their theology. To these terms the Latins had no single words properly corresponding. AUGUSTINE, one of the most eminent of the Latin fathers, seems to have been so sensible of this defect in discoursing on the Trinity (l. v. c. 9), that he apologizes for his language, and considers the expressions he employs as only preferable to a total silence on the subject, but not as equally adapted with the Greek. "Dictum est," says he, "tres personæ, non ut illud diceretur, sed ne taceretur." The truth is, so little do the Greek terms and the Latin, on this subject, correspond, that, if you regard the ordinary significations of the words (and I know not whence else we should get a meaning to them), the doctrine of the East was one, and that of the West was another, on this article. In the East, it was "one essence and three substances," μία οὐσία, τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις: in the West, it was "one substance and three persons," *una substantia, tres personæ*. The phrases τρία πρόσωπα in Greek, *tres substantiæ* in Latin, would both, I imagine, have been exposed to the charge of Tritheism. But which of the two, the Greek or the Latin phraseology, was most suited to the truth of the case, is a question I will not take upon me to determine. I shall only say of Augustine's apology, that it is a very

odd one, and seems to imply, that, on subjects above our comprehension, and to which all human elocution is inadequate, it is better to speak nonsense than be silent. It were to be wished, that, on topics so sublime, men had thought proper to confine themselves to the simple but majestic diction of the Sacred Scriptures. . . . . Religion, the Christian religion in particular, has always been understood to require faith in its principles; and faith in principles requires some degree of knowledge or apprehension of those principles. If total ignorance should prevail, how could men be said to believe that of which they knew nothing? The schoolmen have devised an excellent succedaneum to supply the place of real belief; which necessarily implies that the thing believed is, in some sort, apprehended by the understanding. This succedaneum they have denominated "implicit faith;" an ingenious method of reconciling things incompatible, to believe every thing, and to know nothing, not so much as the terms of the propositions which we believe. — DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL: *Ecclesiastical History*, Lect. 14 and 23; or pp. 242–3, 383.

Nothing affords such an endless subject of debate as a doctrine above the reach of human understanding, and expressed in the ambiguous and improper terms of human language, such as "persons," "generation," "substance," &c., which, in this controversy, either convey no ideas at all, or false ones. . . . It is difficult to conceive what our faith gains by being entertained with a certain number of sounds. If a Chinese should explain a term of his language which I did not understand, by another term which he knew beforehand that I understood as little, his conduct would be justly considered as an insult against the rules of conversation and good breeding; and I think it is an equal violation of the equitable principles of candid controversy to offer, as illustrations, propositions or terms that are as unintelligible and obscure as the thing to be illustrated. — DR. ARCHIBALD MACLAINE: *Note in his Translation of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, cent. xviii. § 27.

The language of Scripture is the language of common sense, — the plain, artless language of nature. Why should writers adopt such language as renders their meaning obscure; and not only obscure, but unintelligible; and not only unintelligible, but utterly lost in the strangeness of their phraseology? — DR. TIMOTHY DWIGHT; *apud Morgridge's True Believer's Defence*, p. 18.

The superabundance of phrases appropriated by some pious authors to the subject of religion, and never applied to any other purpose, has

not only the effect of disgusting persons of taste, but of obscuring religion itself. As they are seldom defined, and never exchanged for equivalent words, they pass current without being understood. They are not the vehicle — they are the substitute — of thought. Among a certain description of Christians, they become by degrees to be regarded with a mystic awe; insomuch that, if a writer expressed the very same ideas in different phrases, he would be condemned as a heretic. To quit the magical circle of words, in which many Christians suffer themselves to be confined, excites as great a clamor as the boldest innovation in sentiment. Controversies, which have been agitated with much warmth, might often have been amicably adjusted, or even finally decided, could the respective partisans have been prevailed on to lay aside their predilection for phrases, and honestly resolve to examine their real import. In defiance of the dictates of candor and good sense, these have been obstinately retained, and have usually been the refuge of ignorance, the apple of discord, and the watchwords of religious hostility. — ROBERT HALL: *Review of Foster's Essays; in Works*, vol. ii. p. 243.

I may understand many things which I do not believe; but I cannot believe any thing which I do not understand, unless it be something addressed merely to my senses, and not to my thinking faculty. A man may with great propriety say, "I understand the Cartesian system of vortices, though I don't believe in it;" but it is absolutely impossible for him to believe in that system without knowing what it is. A man may believe in the ability of the maker of a system, without understanding it; but he cannot believe in the system itself, without understanding it. — THOMAS ERSKINE, Esq., Advocate: *Essay on Faith*, p. 25.

Words which we do not understand are like words spoken in an unknown language: we can neither believe them nor disbelieve them, because we do not know what they say. For instance, I repeat these words, *τοὺς πάντας ἡμᾶς φανερωθῆναι δεῖ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ*. Now, if I were to ask, "Do you believe these words?" is it not manifest that all of you who know Greek enough to understand them may also believe them; but, of those who do not know Greek, not a single person can yet believe them? They are as words spoken to the air. But when I add that these words mean, "We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ," now we can all believe them, because we can all understand them. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Sermons on the Christian Life*, pp. 291–2.

The danger of being not merely *not* understood, but *mis*understood, should be guarded against most sedulously by all who wish not only to keep clear of error, but to inculcate important truth, — by seldom or never employing this ambiguous word ["person"] without some explanation or caution. For if we employ, without any such care, terms which we must be sensible are likely to mislead, at least the unlearned and the unthinking, we cannot stand acquitted on the plea of not having directly inculcated error. . . . . To claim an uninquiring assent to expressions of man's framing (however judiciously framed), without even an attempt to ascertain their meaning, is to fall into one of the worst errors of the Romanists. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Elements of Logic*, Append. I., art. "Person."

To the admirers of this liberal-minded primate, it would have been gratifying, had he stated, a little more clearly and candidly than he has done, his own conceptions of the theological import of the word "person;" and had he told them, whether, when speaking of the three persons in the Godhead, he means three names, relations, offices, characters; three somewhats; or three distinct intelligent agents. The tendency of the article, however, seems to us favorable to some form or other of the Sabellian theory.

Not only have professed theologians, but private Christians, been imposed on by the specious religion of terms of theology; and have betrayed often a fond zeal in the service of their idol-abstractions, not unlike that of the people of old, who are said to have beaten the air with spears to expel the foreign gods by whom their country was supposed to be occupied. For my part, I believe it to be one of the chief causes of the infidelity which prevails among speculative men. . . . . The schoolmen are express in pointing out, after Augustine, that the term [*persona*] was adopted, not to express any definite notion, but to make some answer where silence would have been better; to denote, by some term, what has no suitable word to express it. "Tres *nescio quid*" is the expression of Anselm, in his "Monologium." — BISHOP HAMPDEN: *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 55–6, 133.

By the concessions of eminent Trinitarians, we have, in this section, exhibited a very obvious though an often-neglected principle, that, especially in matters of religion, no phraseology should be adopted which does not express ideas or sentiments capable of being understood. With regard, then, to the unscriptural words used to set forth the doctrine of the Trinity, there is only one alternative, — either to acknowledge that they have no import, and should never be employed; or to allow that they are representatives of ideas, and should be clearly defined or explained. According to the former

admission, the dogma of a tripersonal Deity is barren, unintelligible, unmeaning; consisting of words devoid of thoughts, or involved in sounds without any signification. Agreeably to the latter, in keeping with which "hypostasis," "person," and other terms, are explained so as to be understood, the same dogma is, as we have previously shown, resolvable only into one of two principles, — Tritheism or Sabellianism; three Gods or three relations; a Trinity of eternal beings, either equal or unequal, either self-existent, or, as respects two of the agents, derived and dependent, — or a sort of Unitarianism, which, while adhering essentially to the tenet of God's oneness, would annihilate, by its mysticism, the clear distinction made everywhere in the Christian Scriptures between the universal Father and his only-begotten or best-beloved Son.

We would not oppugn the motives of our Trinitarian brethren, or question the sincerity of their professions. With all her absurdities, Orthodoxy has held in her ranks many great and excellent men, some of them an honor to their race. But the wisest and the best often deceive themselves; and there are few who do not feel easily persuaded of the truth of opinions, which, though inconsistent with reason, are hallowed by tradition or by early and pious associations. An assent may therefore be given to propositions expressing the dogma of a Triune God, from a feeling, that, though unintelligible or contrary to common sense, they may be true; but assuredly there can be no real, unqualified, rational conviction of their truth. If a man says that there are three somewhats, distinctions, or diversities in one God, but has no conception of the meaning of the terms employed, he cannot be said to believe this proposition, any more than he could be said to believe it, if, without previous concert, he heard it announced in a language of which he was ignorant. If he states that there are three intelligent, infinite, equal persons in one infinite, intelligent, supreme being, and is unable, as we have proved, to attach any other signification to the word "person," with its qualifying epithets, than to the word "being," he virtually affirms that three beings are only one, — which is an absurdity. And if, varying again the expression, he asserts that there are three names, relatives, characters, or impersonations in the one God, this he may indeed believe; but, so soon as he declares that one of these names, relatives, characters, or impersonations, addressed the others, or sent them into the world, either as equals or subordinates in the divine nature, he employs terms which are either nonsensical, or have no meaning.

Having thus, by the aid of its friends, shown that the Trinity in Unity, or Unity in Trinity, is a doctrine opposed to human reason, we proceed, in the next chapter, to use weapons drawn from the same armory, with the view of demolishing the position, that Trinitarianism is contained in the records of divine revelation.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRINITY IN UNITY, AND THE DEITY OF CHRIST, NOT DOCTRINES OF REVELATION.

SECT. I. — THE TERMS "TRINITY, TRIUNE GOD, PERSON, HYPOSTASIS, HOMOOUSION," ETC., UNSCRIPTURAL AND IMPROPER.

All mysteries in the world are wholly supported by hard and unintelligible terms.
SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

WE ought to believe that there are three persons and one essence in the Deity, — God the Father unbegotten, God the Son consubstantial with the Father, and God the Holy Spirit proceeding from both. But, though you attentively peruse the whole of Scripture, you will never find these sublime and remarkable words, "Three persons; one essence; unbegotten; consubstantial; proceeding from both." — COCHLÆUS; *apud Sandium*, pp. 4, 5.

The word "Trinity" is never found in the Divine Records, but is only of human invention, and therefore sounds altogether frigidly (*frigide*). Far better would it be tó say "God" than "Trinity." . . . . . There is no reason for objecting to me, that the word "homoousion" was made use of in opposition to the Arians. It was not received by many of the most eminent men, JEROME himself having wished to abolish the term; and, on this account, they did not escape peril. . . . But, though from my soul I abhor the word "homoousion," and am unwilling to employ it, I shall not therefore be a heretic. — MARTIN LUTHER: *Postil. Major.*, fol. 282; *Confut. Rat. Latom.*, tom. ii. fol. 240.

The word "consubstantial" (ὁμοούσιος), I confess, is not to be found in the Scripture. — JOHN CALVIN: *Institutes*, book iv. chap. viii. 16.

The phrase, "Holy Trinity, one God," is dangerous and improper. — LAMBERT DANEAU: *Resp. ad Genebrard.* cap. iii.; *Opuscula*, p. 1327

The words "Trinity," "homoousion," "hypostasis," "procession," &c. (which, for the better expressing of the catholic sense, they were forced to use), were not expressly to be found in the Holy Scriptures. — Bp. Sanderson: *Ad Clerum, a Sermon preached Oct.* 8, 1641, p. 6.

The words "Trinity," "person," "homoousion," and others of a similar kind, besides being ambiguous, . . . never occur in the Scriptures. — Philip Limborch: *Theologia Christiana*, lib. vii. cap. 21, § 13.

This doctrine [that from the eternal essence there proceeded, from all eternity, two other essences, the Son and the Holy Spirit] cannot be expressed in an intelligible manner in the phrase, style, and dialect of the Holy Scripture alone; which may give no small cause of suspicion, were there no other reason besides, that it is not the doctrine of the apostles. There is no authority upon earth that can oblige us to substitute any expressions invented since the time of the apostles to those that these holy and inspired men themselves used. — John Le Clerc: *Abstract of Dr. Clarke's Polemical Writings*, p. 126.

In p. 113, Le Clerc says that he prefers to Dr. Samuel Clarke's views the common opinion as to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

It must be allowed that there is no such proposition as this, that "one and the same God is three different persons," formally and in terms, to be found in the Sacred Writings, either of the Old or New Testament; neither is it pretended that there is any word of the same signification or importance with the word "Trinity," used in Scripture, with relation to God. — Dr. Robert South: *Considerations concerning the Trinity*, p. 38.

The title of "Mother of God," applied to the Virgin Mary, is not perhaps so innocent as Dr. Mosheim takes it to be. . . . The invention and use of such mysterious terms as have no place in Scripture are undoubtedly pernicious to true religion. . . . . Theophilus of Antioch [who died about the year 181, was] the first who made use of the word "Trinity" to express the distinction of what divines call persons in the Godhead. The Christian church is very little obliged to him for his invention. The use of this and other unscriptural terms, to which men attach either no ideas or false ones, has wounded charity and peace, without promoting truth and knowledge. It has produced heresies of the worst kind. — Dr. Archibald Maclaine: *Note in his Translation of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, cent. v. part ii. chap. 5, § 9; and *Chronological Tables*, cent. ii.

It is my firm conviction, that, before every mixed or unlearned audience, the plain duties of temperance, modesty, diligence, resignation, honesty, veracity, humility, placability, and piety, illustrated again and again by the dignified phraseology of Scripture, and enforced by the awful sanctions of future rewards and punishments, as prepared by that Being who "spake as never man spake," are more proper for the pulpit than topics known under the technical terms of consubstantiality specific and numerical, hypostatic union, eternal filiation, eternal procession, actual regeneration by special grace, possible justification by faith only, supralapsarianism and sublapsarianism, and other phrases, familiar, I grant, to the polemic, dear to the bigot, and animating to the multitude, but uncouth to the ear and unedifying to the heart of many well-informed and well-disposed Christians. — DR. SAMUEL PARR: *Works*, vol. v. pp. 118–19.

This version ["the express image of his *person*," Heb. i. 3] has given rise to the opinion, that the word "person," as applied to the Trinity, is scriptural. The Greek word *ὑπόστασις*, however, signifies *substance* or *essence*. It is true that in ecclesiastical Greek it is also used to denote *person*; but this signification had not been given to it when the New Testament was written. After the rise of the Arian controversy, the word *ὑπόστασις* began to be used for *person*; but, at an early period, that sense was unknown. The term "person," therefore, is not found in Scripture in the sense in which we usually speak of the three persons of the Trinity. — DR. SAMUEL DAVIDSON: *Sacred Hermeneutics*, pp. 23–4.

But this writer approves of the use of the word in its dogmatic sense.

The name of "purgatory" scarcely requires a passing comment. It has, indeed, been made a topic of abuse, on the ground that it is not to be found in Scripture. But where is the word "Trinity" to be met with? Where is the word "Incarnation" to be read in Scripture? Where are many other terms, held most sacred and important in the Christian religion? — CARDINAL WISEMAN: *Lectures on the Doctrines of the Catholic Church*, vol. ii. p. 50.

It is admitted also by ERASMUS, TILLOTSON, HEY, TOMLINE, and many others, that the words and phrases here spoken of do not occur in the Bible. But where is the man who would venture to say that they do? Combining this fact with what seems equally obvious, that there are no other terms in which a Trinity in Unity can be expressed than those which have been used by theologians, it will follow that the doctrine itself is not revealed in Holy Scripture

SECT. II. — THE DOCTRINE OF A TRIUNE GOD, OR OF THE DEITY OF CHRIST, NOT REVEALED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, OR KNOWN TO THE JEWS.

He takes false shadows for true substances. — SHAKSPEARE.

§ 1. NOT REVEALED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

It is evident, that, from the authorities of the Old Testament, sufficient and clear proof cannot be drawn either for the Trinity, or for a plurality of divine persons. — BISHOP TOSTAT: *Op.*, tom. xii.; *De Sanct. Trin.*, p. 14.

The mystery of the most Holy Trinity had never at any time penetrated the mind, however excellent, or inquisitive as to divine matters; nor could it; but to the gospel alone the disclosure and preaching of that mystery were reserved. . . . That article was not laid down in the Old Testament as an object of belief, because the people as yet were incapable of receiving it. The unity of God was, however, inculcated in the law, in opposition to idolatry; whence this first command, "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one God," Deut. vi. 4. — SALMERON: *Comm.*, tom. i. pp. 201–2; Prolog. xi. can. XXV.

The mystery of the most holy Trinity was not yet [at the time of Christ] divulged, so that the Jews could expressly believe that he was by nature the Son of God, God of God, of one substance, power, and glory with God the Father. This doctrine Jesus reserved to himself to promulgate; . . . though he did not at the beginning expressly teach it to his disciples, but led them to it by degrees. — LUCAS BRUGENSIS on John i. 49.

The doctrine of the Trinity was not propounded expressly to the Jews in the Old Testament, because they were incapable of it, &c. — CARDINAL BELLARMINE: *De Christo*, lib. ii. cap. 6.

So say also RUPERTUS TUITIENSIS, GALATIN, STEUCHUS EUGUBINUS, SALABERT, and other Roman Catholic commentators.

The glorious mystery of the Trinity came hereby to be unfolded more clearly, if not the first discovery made of the three persons hereby, there being scarce the footsteps of them distinctly and clearly to be seen in the works of the creation or in the law. But now, when the gospel came to be revealed, &c. — DR. THOMAS GOODWIN: *Works*, vol. i. part iii. p. 65.

I think that it [the doctrine of the Trinity] was a thing not only locked up from the researches of reason amongst those that were led only by reason, — I mean the Gentiles, — but that it was also concealed from, or at best but obscurely known by, the Jewish church. . . . That God did so [conceal it], the Old Testament, which is the great ark and repository of the Jewish religion, seems sufficiently to declare; there being no text in it that plainly and expressly holds forth a Trinity of persons in the Godhead. Several texts are, indeed, urged for that purpose; though, whatever they may allude to, they seem not yet to be of that force and evidence as to infer what some undertake to prove by them; such as are Gen. i. 1, 26. Isa. vi. 3. . . . . I conclude that it is very probable that the discovery of this mystery was a privilege reserved to bless the times of Christianity withal, and that the Jews had either none, or but a very weak and confused knowledge of it. — DR. ROBERT SOUTH: *Sermons*, vol. iv. pp. 296–301.

Take the Old Testament without the New, and it must be confessed that it will not be easy to prove this article [that of the Trinity] from it. — BISHOP BURNET: *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, Art. i. p. 43.

No one can take from the Jews those traditions of the Trinity which the Holy Spirit hath scattered here and there in the Scripture. It was by these that God prepared the minds of men to receive that incomprehensible mystery. At the same time, he conducted the people slowly, step by step; and the knowledge of that great truth was proportioned to an economy covered with shadows and figures. If, in spite of the light which the evangelists have shed upon it, and the accomplishment of prophecy, which of all commentaries is the clearest and most intelligible, we still can with difficulty discover the Trinity in the Old Testament, one may presume that the Jews paid but little attention to it, and that, with all their research, they had but a very obscure perception of this dogma. . . . There is reason to fear, that these men, who do not see the Trinity in the New Testament, where it is clearly expressed, will have still greater difficulty in discovering it in the Old, where it is only obscurely intimated. — BASNAGE: *History of the Jews*, b. iv. c. 5; *apud Blomfield's Dissert. upon the Traditional Knowledge of a Promised Redeemer*, p. 168.

There are no passages in the Old Testament which indicate a Trinity [of persons in the Godhead]. — DÖDERLEIN: *Institutio Theologi Christiani*, § 113.

As no passage in the Old Testament satisfactorily proves that the writers had any knowledge of three persons in the Godhead, and as it is not at all probable that among the Hebrews, who on various occasions manifested a proneness towards Polytheism, the doctrine of the Trinity, such as is exhibited in the Christian church, could be rightly understood, or be imparted without exerting an injurious effect on the worship of the one true God, I am of opinion that, &c. — H. A. SCHOTT: *Opuscula*, tom. ii. p. 56.

CALIXTUS gave occasion for increasing the strife, by a disputation on the mystery of the Trinity, which Dr. Jo. LATERMANN wrote and defended under him, in 1645; in which it was maintained that the doctrine of the Trinity was not made known to the fathers under the Old Testament; and that it was a created angel, and not the Son of God, who appeared to the patriarchs. — JOHN R. SCHLEGEL, *as quoted by Dr. Murdock in his edition of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, vol. iii. p. 374.

A disciple of the school of Voltaire might indeed object, that what the learned divines at any period in the history of the church did not know, was at all events known to the Holy Ghost, and that he might have taught it to them. To which question I would only reply by asking, Why did the same Spirit, who spake by the mouth of the prophets under the old covenant, merely declare the unity of the Godhead, and not the Trinity, by the mouth of Moses, to the chosen people? The answer to this question will probably refer, on the one hand, to the plan of the Divine Wisdom for the education of the Jewish people, and, on the other hand, to the Polytheism of the ancient world, which made such a strict opposition necessary. — GUENTHER, *as quoted in Archd. Hare's Mission of the Comforter*, vol. ii. p. 432.

I do not say that you will find the doctrine [of the Trinity], which we have been proclaiming to-day, in this chapter [Ezek. i.]. I do not believe that you can. I have not the slightest wish to find it there, or to put it there. It would be a shock to all my convictions, if I thought that Ezekiel was enunciating a dogma when he professed to be recording a vision; or that the mystery, which, as the church teaches by the order of her services, could not be revealed till Christ was glorified and the Spirit given, was already made known to the prophet as he sat among the captives by the river Chebar. I cannot say how much mischief seems to me to be done, when, instead of striving to follow strictly the actual statements of the Old-Testament writers, we insist upon wringing out of texts or symbols, which we

have moulded according to our fancy, the proof of some New-Testament revelation. . . . Ezekiel had been taught upon his mother's knees the words, "Hear, O Israel! the Lord thy God is one Lord." — F. D. MAURICE: *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 429–30.

[1] Prior to this moment [of the incarnation of the Logos], there has been no appearance of Trinity in the revelations God has made of his being; but just here, — whether as resulting from the incarnation, or as implied in it, we are not informed, — a threefold personality or impersonation of God begins to offer itself to view. . . . . The word "spirit" had been used before, as in reference to the agency of God, but only in a remoter and more tropical sense, as the word "Father" had been: the conception of a divine personality or impersonation, called the Holy Spirit, was unknown. We may imagine otherwise in one or two cases, as when David prays, "Take not thy holy spirit from me," but, I think, without any sufficient reason. . . . . [2] The Old Testament . . . not only reveals oneness, leaving the matter of threeness to be revealed afterward, as some might imagine, but it so reveals the oneness as to exclude any suspicion or thought of threeness; and so that every pious Jew, between Abraham and Christ, would have insisted on a unity of person in the God of their worship, opposed to every conception of threeness; and would have referred, without hesitation, to Moses and the prophets for his proofs. — DR. HORACE BUSHNELL.

The passages numbered [1] are quoted from "God in Christ," pp. 147-8, 172; that numbered [2] is from "Christ in Theology," pp. 165–6.

We have seen the full and explicit testimonies given to the unity and personality of the Deity. . . . Respecting the divine nature as involving a Trinity of persons, though it may be implied or dimly intimated, no declaration is made. This is a distinctive doctrine of the New Testament. The fact that God existed as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is not co-eval with its enunciation; nor is the knowledge of this fact necessarily connected with any acts of the Divine Being which imply such a peculiarity in his essence. . . . To our minds, already enlarged with other views of the divine economy, it may be easy to perceive, that God, in many of his interpositions before the advent of Christ, did still communicate with men in the person of his Son, or in the person of the Holy Ghost. Is there decisive evidence that the fact was recognized? Does the Old Testament contain proof that the people of God had the conception of a Trinity in the divine nature? . . . If God had been declared then as existing as Father,

Son, and Holy Ghost; if it had been said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," . . . how could it have been possible, with the crude and uncultivated minds of the age, already accustomed to the idea of a multitude of gods, to have stopped short of the conclusion, that the Father was the true God, and that the Word was another true God? . . . It is not uncommon to assume that the Holy Spirit and the Divine Saviour are both revealed in the Old Testament. . . . We understand it as the third person of the Holy Trinity. The usage in the Old Testament does not necessarily imply such a knowledge. . . . It was either a name of God himself, not indicating any peculiarity in his nature, or the expression of the divine energy as it produced results in the material world, or enlightened and directed the human mind. . . . In like manner, the Son of God was not known in his mysterious unity with the Father. . . . However clear it may be to our minds, that many of these passages [those which contain express allusions to him] are consistent with the absolute Divinity of Christ and of his co-equality with the Father, it is by no means evident that they conveyed such an idea to the Jews. . . . The Hebrew Scriptures, read in their independent obscurity, and without the solvent for their almost enigmatical intimations which is furnished by the New, would scarcely enable the most sanguine mind to discover in the promised one the fulness of the Godhead. Certain it is, that no decisive facts can be adduced to show that the Hebrews ever obtained from their Scriptures a well-defined spiritual idea of the complete character of Jesus, or were led to expect him as a king possessing the attributes and enjoying the throne with God himself. . . . Nowhere is it indicated, in language sufficiently exact to convey the idea definitely, that the Messiah was really the God of the Jews, or the Son of God, equal in all divine attributes with the Father. It is quite certain, that, when Christ appeared, even those who knew him most intimately were not prepared to appreciate him in this exalted and mysterious character. — DR. SETH SWEETSER, *in Bibliotheca Sacra for January*, 1854; vol. xi. pp. 97–101.

Taking up, in our next volume, *seriatim*, all the texts of the Old Testament which have been thought to intimate the existence of a divine Trinity or plurality, or of what are called the second and third persons in the Godhead, it will be our object, by the continuous aid of orthodox divines, not only to confirm the main sentiment expressed in the extracts just made, but to prove that there is not the slightest foundation in the Jewish Scriptures for the truth of these dogmas.

§ 2. A Triune God and the Deity of Christ unknown to the Ancient Jews.

The Jews . . . expected a Messiah that would be, not the Son of God by his own nature, but only a man like the other prophets, though surpassing them in wisdom, virtue, and capacity to obtain and govern the whole world. — Philip Melancthon, *as quoted by Dr. Cox in his Life of Melancthon*, p. 120.

The great mystery of the Trinity, though it be frequently intimated in the Old Testament, yet it is an hard matter rightly to understand it without the New; insomuch that the Jews, though they have had the law above three thousand, and the prophets above two thousand, years amongst them, yet to this day they could never make this an article of faith; but they, as well as the Mahometans, still assert that God is only one in person, as well as nature. — Bishop Beveridge: *Private Thoughts*, part ii. p. 66.

Very good; but where, without the previous hypothesis of this doctrine, are these intimations to be found? or, if they did exist, how is it that they were never discovered by the Jews?

The ancient prophecies give more proofs of our Lord's Divinity than is generally thought. . . . The Jews, probably before, most certainly after, the incarnation, interpreted these expressions in another way. They seem to have been, in a great measure, strangers to the doctrine I am explaining, and to have looked for nothing in the Messiah's person but what was human; nothing in the deliverance to be wrought by him but what was temporal. Their first disputes with the Christians were not only whether Jesus was the Messiah, but whether the Messiah was to be more than man; and therefore it hath been an unsuccessful as well as useless attempt to prove this article of the Christian faith from some obscure passages of the ancient Rabbins. — Dr. Thos. Mangey: *Plain Notions of our Lord's Divinity*, pp. 8, 9.

Though the general belief of the Jews at that time [when Jesus was on earth] was, that the Messiah would be a much greater man than David, a mighty conqueror, and even a universal monarch, the sovereign of the kings of the earth, who was to subdue all nations, and render them tributary to the chosen people; yet they still supposed him to be a mere man, possessed of no higher nature than that which he derived from his earthly progenitors. — Dr. George Campbell: *The Four Gospels*, Dissert. vii. part i. § 9.

To keep them steadfast in the belief of the divine unity and spirituality, was as much perhaps as was intended by all the revelations of speculative doctrines made to the Israelites; nor will this purpose appear unworthy of all the means which the Almighty made use of in effecting it, whether we consider their usual proneness to idolatry and polytheism, or the deleterious effects in practice which have been uniformly found accompanying these errors in belief. This has been suggested by an excellent divine as a reason why the doctrine of the Trinity, which forms so interesting and essential a part of the orthodox creed, was not revealed to the Jews, or at least is not to be so readily collected from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, as it is from the uniform tenor of the gospel.... Had the Jews been taught by Moses, as Christians have been since in the gospel, that in the divine essence were three distinct persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, it is evident, that, circumstanced as they were, this doctrine would have quickly been corrupted to sanction the most pernicious errors.... It is, however, contended by some, that the more learned Jews in later times were not unacquainted with this doctrine; and it is certain that Christians, assisted by the light of the gospel, are enabled to collect some very strong proofs of it from the writings of Moses and the prophets. But that the people at large were entirely without the notion of a Trinity, is evident enough; and, in the scheme of the divine nature delivered to them, they were not cautioned against confounding the persons in the Godhead, lest, from the natural tendency of weak minds, they should fall into the opposite extreme of dividing the substance, which, according to their moral and intellectual state at the time, would have proved to them the far more dangerous delusion. — J. BROWNE: *Sermons preached at the Lecture founded by John Bampton*, pp. 85–8.

Instead of alleging that the doctrine of the Trinity was not revealed to the Jews because it would have led them to idolatrous practices, we should be disposed to assign another reason, — that God is not, as Trinitarians say, three persons, but, as the united voices of reason and revelation testify, only one.

The opinion of CALIXTUS [who published, in 1645 and 1649, two essays against the notion that the doctrine of a Trinity was to a greater or less degree known to the Israelites at the time when the New Testament was written, at least that a plurality in the Godhead was believed by them] . . . has gradually obtained the approbation of most theologians of the present time. — G. C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. xxxiv.

This argument [derived from the apocryphal Book of Enoch discovered in Abyssinia by James Bruce], in proof that the Jews, before the birth of Christ, believed the doctrine of the Trinity, appears to me much more important and conclusive than that which has been indeed frequently, but to my mind, I confess, not satisfactorily, deduced from the philosophical principles of the ancient Cabala. Cabalistical theology, I well know, has its *aziluth*, or emanations of Deity; but these, I am convinced, notwithstanding the persuasions of many Christians upon the subject, were at no period ever contemplated by the Jews themselves as distinct persons, but merely as distinct energies, in the Godhead. Indeed, if the argument has any force at all, it is calculated to prove more than its advocates wish; for it goes to demonstrate, that the Jews believed in ten, not in three, personal emanations of Deity; for such is the number of the Sephiroth. Imagination is always ready to discover resemblances where none in reality exist; but sober reasoning can never surely approve the indiscreet attempt of representing Christian truth as arrayed in the meretricious garb of the Jewish Cabala. That singular, and, to those perhaps who penetrate its exterior surface, fascinating system of allegorical subtleties, has, no doubt, its brighter as well as its darker parts, — its true as well as its false allusions; but, instead of reducing its wild combinations of opinion to the standard of Scripture, we shall, I am persuaded, be less likely to err if we refer them to the ancient and predominant philosophy of the East; from which they seem to have originally sprung, and from which they are as inseparable as the shadow is from its substance. — ARCHBISHOP LAURENCE: *Preliminary Dissertation on his Translation of the Book of Enoch*, pp. liv.—lvi. third edition.

Dr. LAURENCE thinks that the apocryphal book referred to at the commencement of the preceding extract was written by a Jew, not many years before the birth of Christ; MOSES STUART, that it was composed by an oriental *Christian* Jew, during the latter half of the first century. The principal passage on which the archbishop founds his opinion, that the ancient Jews believed the doctrine of the Trinity, reads as follows: "He [the Elect one] shall call to every power of the heavens, to all the holy above, and to the power of God. The Cherubim, the Seraphim, and the Ophanim, all the angels of power, and all the angels of the Lords, namely, of the Elect one, and of the other Power, who (was) upon earth over the water on that day, shall raise their united voice," &c. Chap. lx. 13, 14. But nothing is said here of a Trinity of persons in one God, or of the co-equality and consubstantiality of "the Elect one" and "the other Power." All that can be inferred is, that they were superior to the angels.

But even the slightest aspect of a Triune Deity, if there be any in the words quoted, is done away with in the following translation of Dr. A. G. HOFFMAN, as cited by MOSES STUART in his work on the Apocalypse, vol. i. p. 69: "Angels of power and all angels of lordships (*i.e.* who are of superior order), and the Elect and the other Powers, who were on earth over the water in that day; *i.e.* superior angels present and assisting at the creation."

We quote another passage (chap. xlvi. 1, 2), which clearly represents the "Son of man" as distinct from, and inferior to, "the Ancient of days," or "Lord of spirits:" — "Then I inquired of one of the angels, who went with me, and who showed me every secret thing, concerning this Son of man; who he was; whence he was; and why he accompanied the Ancient of days. He answered and said unto me, This is the Son of man, to whom righteousness belongs, with whom righteousness has dwelt, and who will reveal all the treasures of that which is concealed; for the Lord of spirits has chosen him, and his portion has surpassed all before the Lord of spirits in everlasting uprightness."

It is not at all improbable that some of the learned Jews who resided in the East, and had intercourse with the Chaldeans and Persians, may have imbibed from them their philosophical notions respecting divine powers and intelligences connected with, and dependent on, the Supreme Being. At all events, to use the language of Dr. J. PYE SMITH (Script. Test., vol. i. p. 338), "we have sufficient evidence that the doctrines of religion [in the latter portion of the interval between the closing of the Old Testament and the general diffusion of Christianity] were corrupted even to the first principles, and that its profession and practice had lost almost every character of a reasonable service." But there seems no reason to believe, that the great body of the Jews, and particularly those of Palestine, had the faintest conception of a Triad of hypostases in the divine nature, or of the Supreme Divinity of the expected Messiah.

I cannot but look upon it as unfortunate, that PICUS of Mirandola, and other writers, should have quoted these cabalistic forgeries [the Rabbinical and Talmudical writings] as supporting the Christian doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, &c. — DR. EDWARD BURTON: *Bampton Lectures*, p. 301.

Is it not monstrous, that, the Jews having, according to WHITAKER [in his "Origin of Arianism Disclosed"], fully believed a Trinity, one and all, but half a century or less before Trypho, Justin should never refer to this general faith; never reproach Trypho with the present opposition to it as a heresy from their own forefathers, even those who rejected Christ, or rather Jesus as Christ? But no: not a single objection ever strikes Mr. Whitaker, or appears worthy of an answer. The stupidest become authentic; the most fantastic abstractions of the Alexandrine dreamers, substantial realities! I confess this book has

satisfied me how little erudition will gain a man now-a-days the reputation of vast learning, if it be only accompanied with dash and insolence. — S. T. COLERIDGE: *Literary Remains; in Works*, vol. v. pp. 455–6.

Dr. ALLIX undertakes to prove [in the "Judgment of the Jewish Church," "a work" which, Dr. PYE SMITH says, is "not remarkable for accurate statement or judicious reasoning"], that the Jews, before the time of Christ, according to the received expositions of the Old Testament, derived from their fathers, had a notion of a plurality of persons in the unity of the divine essence, and that this plurality was a Trinity; that, according to the doctrine of the old synagogue, the Jews apprehended the Word as a true and proper person; and held that the Word was the Son of God, — that he was the true God, — that he was to be Jehovah indeed. I confess that I am not prepared to go to the full length of these positions. I think it in the highest degree probable . . . that the Jews expected a Messiah who should be a sharer in the divine nature, but not one who should be equal with God. We cannot easily believe, that even the more enlightened of their nation had such a knowledge of the nature of their Christ as we derive from the recorded testimony of our Saviour and his apostles; nor, if it be granted that they looked for a divine Redeemer, does it necessarily follow that they thought him equal to, much less united with, the Supreme God. . . . That they should have expected their Messiah to have been very and perfect God, of one substance with the Father, is, I think, more than we are warranted in asserting. This I believe to have been one of those sublime doctrines which were reserved for the fuller disclosure of the great mystery of godliness. High and majestic as were the titles which the prophets had applied to the Messiah, — titles importing nothing less than his being invested with the most striking attributes of the Deity, — yet they were qualified by many descriptions which implied that he was to be subject to the accidents of human nature; so that, in all likelihood, the Jews expected that he who was described in their Scriptures both as Son of God and Son of man was to be a divine being, of transcendent power and dignity, yet acting with delegated authority, and shining with imparted light. — BISHOP BLOMFIELD: *Dissertation upon the Traditional Knowledge of a Promised Redeemer*, pp. 96–8.

In his Preface, p. iv., the learned prelate acknowledges that the Jewish commentaries have been corrupted from the impure fountains of heathen philosophy.

Nor would such a mythus [as that of the miraculous conception, if it were a mythus] have been consistent with Jewish modes of thought. . . . Such a fable as the birth of the Messiah from a virgin could have arisen anywhere else earlier than among the Jews. Their doctrine of the Divine Unity, which placed an impassable gulf between God and the world; their high regard for the marriage-relation, which led them to abhor unwedded life; and, above all, their full persuasion that the Messiah was to be an ordinary man, undistinguished by any thing supernatural, and not to be endowed with divine power, before the time of his solemn consecration to the Messiahship, — all conspired to render such an invention impossible among them. — AUGUSTUS NEANDER: *Life of Jesus*, pp. 14, 15.

[1] Were the Jews Trinitarians, before the coming of Christ? I know of no satisfactory evidence of this fact. All the efforts to prove it have ended in mere appeals to cabalizing Jews, who lived long after the New Testament was written. . . . . [2] If it be true, as some assert, that the Jews of our Saviour's time, before they became Christians, were accustomed to believe that their Messiah was to be a *divine* person, how can it be accounted for, that, after the first generation of Christians among them, the great body of Jewish converts in Palestine, and many elsewhere, became Ebionites, the peculiarity of whose opinion was a denial of the divine nature of that Saviour whom they professed to honor? If all the tendency of their education and traditional belief had been as stated above, this fact seems to be altogether unaccountable. It speaks more than volumes of mere reasoning from conjecture, or from the declarations of Rabbins living long after the Christian era had commenced; of which we find such striking examples in P. ALLIX's learned book on ancient Jewish opinions. . . . How much the pious Jews of ancient times actually deduced from such passages [of the Old Testament as appear to ascribe a divine nature to the Messiah, and to set forth the Spirit of God as a divine person] we do not know; and we possess no adequate means of determining. But that the later Jews, and in particular those cotemporary with the apostles, knew nothing of the doctrine of a Trinity, seems to be rendered nearly certain from the fact, that neither Josephus, nor Philo in all his numerous speculations on the subject of religion, gives any intimation of this. Whatever there is in Philo that seems to approach to this, is merely the eclectic philosophy intermingled with his religious views, and may be found in heathen writers almost or quite as fully as in him. At all events, the Nazaræan and Ebionitish sects, as

prevalent among early Christian Jews, incontestably prove what the usual and predominant state of the Jewish mind was. — MOSES STUART.

The first extract is taken from STUART'S "Critical History of the Old-Testament Canon," p. 407; the second, from his article on Schleiermacher, in the "Biblical Repository" for April and July, 1835, vol. vi. p. 107.

The Hebrew people were little concerned with metaphysical questions. . . . That Jehovah, who is highly exalted above all that is finite, who according to the very idea of him is invisible, whose very aspect is consuming, should come down to this world, clothe himself with a costume that is finite, and become man, — this thought is wholly foreign to the Hebrew religion, in itself considered. Much rather must we admit, that the Hebrew religion glories in the fact, that, in opposition to the heathen world, it holds fast the holy personality of Jehovah, pure and highly exalted above nature and the whole world; but this it could not do, if it had established a ὁμούσια, e.g. of humanity with Divinity in any sense. To keep itself above all natural religion, the moral view taken by the Hebrew religion must form for itself such a metaphysical view of the relation between God and the world, as lay far distant from God's becoming a man; yea, even such an one that the Hebrew world would shudder and be astonished at a thought like this. — J. A. DORNER, *apud Stuart, in Bib. Sac.*, vol. vii. p. 699.

EXPLANATION OF THE PHRASE, "WORD OF THE LORD," OCCURRING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND IN OTHER JEWISH WRITINGS.

I do not think that we ought to use, as an authority, the last paraphrases, in which is often found the term "Word," when God is spoken of, — I say, that we ought not to use them as an authority to prove the Divinity of the Word in the New Testament. Such expressions are explained by the Jews otherwise than by Christians; and, besides, it is not judicious to make the truths of Christianity depend on uncertain allegories, which are most commonly founded on the imagination of the Jewish doctors. — FATHER SIMON: *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*, liv. iii. chap. 24.

With much better reason the same Frenchman disapproves of the use of the Targums for the proof of the λόγος, or Word, in that sense in which we find it expressed in the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John. For through all those Targums, in a great number of places where mention is made of God in the original Hebrew, it being rendered "the word of God" in the Chaldee interpretation, hence the

Chaldee *Memra*, which in that phrase signifieth "the Word," hath been thought to correspond with the Greek λόγος in that Gospel, and both exactly to denote the same thing. And, therefore, several learned men have endeavored to explain the one by the other, and from hence to prove the Divinity of our Saviour. But others, as well as Monsieur SIMON, being sensible that this phrase in the Chaldee being an idiom in that language, which may be otherwise explained, they are against pressing any argument from it for this point, because it is capable of an answer to which we cannot well reply. — DR. H. PRIDEAUX: *The Old and New Testament Connected*, vol. ii. pp. 355–6.

Though they [namely, the Rabbins] frequently used the expression, מֵימְרָא דַיְיָ, that is, *the word of God*, especially in their Targums or paraphrases, they did not mean to express a separate and distinct being from Jehovah himself, or, as we should say, the second person of the Trinity. The word מֵימְרָא is frequently used in the Chaldee paraphrases as equivalent to the Hebrew הַשֵּׁם, that is, *the Name*, a term by which the Jews — who, out of superstitious reverence for the word "Jehovah," avoided the uttering of it as much as possible — denoted the Supreme Being. See, for instance, Isa. xxvi. 4, in the Chaldee paraphrase. — J. D. MICHAELIS: *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. iii. part i. pp. 280–1.

It has been said that the Christians came to speak of Christ as the Word, because, in the Jewish Targums, *Memra*, or the Word, was substituted for the ineffable name "Jehovah." The fact appears to be partly true; but the argument deduced from it is extremely fallacious. When we read of God acting or speaking by himself, he is said in the Targums to have acted or spoken "by his word;" and it has been asserted that *Memra*, or "the Word," is used distinctively for the Messiah. But it has been proved satisfactorily, that Memra is never used in the Targums for a distinct and separate person: it is, in fact, only another form for the pronoun "himself." It was at first applied only to Jehovah, as when he is said "to have sworn by himself," or "to have made a covenant between himself and any one." The use of the term was afterwards transferred to human actions; and though the Targums apply it in those places which they interpret of the Messiah, yet this application of it is by no means exclusive; and, as I have said, it is never used for a person separate and distinct from the principal subject of the sentence. — DR. ROBERT BURTON: *Bampton Lectures; in Theological Works*, vol. iii. pp. 221–2.

The following appear to be the results of impartially examining this question: 1. That the primary import of the Chaldee expression ["the word of Jah"] is *that*, whatever it may be, which is the *medium* of communicating the mind and intentions of one person to another. 2. That it hence assumed the sense of a reciprocal pronoun. 3. That, when used in the latter sense, its most usual application is to the Divine Being; denoting, if we may use the expression, "God," "his very self," *Deus ipsissimus;* and is the synonyme and substitute of the most exclusive of all the appellatives of Deity, the name "Jehovah." 4. That there is no certain proof of its being distinctly applied to the Messiah in any of the Targums now extant; while, in very numerous places, it is so plainly used with personal attributives, yet in distinction from the name of God, that an application to the Messiah cannot be held improbable. 5. That solely from the use of the phrase, *the Memra of Jah*, or "the word of the Lord," in those paraphrases, no absolute information can be deduced concerning the doctrine of the Jews, in the interval between the Old Testament and the New, upon the person of their expected Messiah. I have said, *solely* from the use of this phrase; but, if we combine this fact with others derived from the study of the Old Testament, it will, I conceive, appear a very rational conjecture, that the Rabbinical authors of the age referred to had vague ideas of the "Word" as an intelligent agent, the medium of the divine operations and communications to mankind. I cannot, however, make this opinion a ground of independent argument, as has been done by some writers, who have probably taken it from each other, in succession, without much severity of examination. — DR. J. P. SMITH: *Scripture Testimony*, vol. i. pp. 346–7.

It would be easy to quote additional passages of a similar character, as to the meaning of the phrase "Memra or word of Jah," from SALMERON, GROTIUS, LEWIS CAPELLUS, LE CLERC, BEAUSOBRE, DÖDERLEIN, and other learned men in the ranks of the orthodox.

The following extracts are more comprehensive, explaining the phrase "word of the Lord," or "of God," as used not only in the Targums, but in the Old Testament and in the Apocrypha: —

Some have endeavored to prove that the Jews had some knowledge of the Trinity, or at least of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, from all these sources [namely, the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, and the Chaldaic Paraphrases]. But (*a*) the texts cited from the Old Testament, in proof of this point, do not by themselves perfectly establish

it. . . . Neither (*b*) are the texts cited from the Apocrypha altogether satisfactory. The appellation, λόγος θεοῦ [*word of God*], which occurs frequently in the Book of Wisdom and in Sirach, cannot be clearly proved, in any one instance, to designate a person of the Godhead, but signifies either the divine oracles and revelations, as Sir. i. 5, or the divine decrees and will, as Sir. xliii. 26. Book of Wisdom, xviii. 15, coll. ix. 1; xvi. 12. . . . Nor does the appellation "Son of God," in the Book of Wisdom, ii. 13–20, designate the Messiah, but, in a more general sense, a favorite of God, one approved by Heaven, a righteous person. The phrase "Holy Spirit," used in the same book (chap. ix. 17, 18), there means only a holy temper, virtue, temperance, continence, *sanctitas animi:* cf. ix. 4, 10. (*c*) The terms, מֵימְרָא אֱלֹהִים, מֵימְרָא דִי יוּ [*the word of Jah* and *the word of God*], are used very frequently in the Chaldaic paraphrases, and seem, as there employed, to designate a person, and have therefore been compared with the appellation λόγος θεοῦ, and considered as indicating the doctrine of the Trinity. This is a very important argument. It is doubtful, however, whether these terms were understood by the Jews contemporary with the paraphrasts as titles of the Messiah; or whether, as many suppose, they were regarded as synonymous with *numen, majestas divina.* — G. C. KNAPP: *Lectures on Christian Theology,* sect. xli. I.

Dr. WOODS, the translator of Knapp's Lectures, thinks there is no doubt that in the Book of Wisdom, an Ægyptico-Jewish production, the writer, influenced by the extravagant philosophy of Plato and of the East which then prevailed at Alexandria, hypostatized the divine attributes, and meant to speak of "Wisdom" as a being who proceeded, before the creation, from the substance of God. If this opinion were correct, it would not follow that he believed the Messiah to have been a person in the Godhead, or that there were three persons in the divine nature; nor, if he had, would it follow that the great body of the Jewish nation adopted his theology.

A careful examination of the Scriptures will lead us to see that the Hebrews were accustomed to speak of *the word of God* in a manner which not unfrequently led to personification; and at times they expressed themselves almost as if it were a hypostasis. The foundation of this seems to be laid in Gen. i. 3: "God *said,* Let there be light; and there was light." This is equivalent to a declaration, that the word of God has in it a creative power. Expressly after this tenor is Ps. xxxiii. 6: "By the *word* of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the *breath of his mouth.*" There

can indeed be no reasonable ground to doubt that all this is figurative; or, in other words, that it is a symbolical representation of God's executive power or energy. Not unfrequently is "the word of God" spoken of in such a way as would seem, at first view, to indicate that it is regarded as a being, a hypostasis, which possesses and exercises attributes of its own. Thus it is said in Heb. xi. 3, that "the worlds were framed by the word of God:" so in 2 Pet. iii. 5. This *word* is a life-giving power: Deut. viii. 3. Matt. iv. 4. Luke iv. 4. It gives spiritual as well as physical life: Ps. cxix. 50. 1 Pet. i. 23. It has attributes or qualities ascribed to it: Ps. cxix. 89. Isa. xl. 8. 1 Pet. i. 23. It is an agent in the execution of the divine commands: Ps. cvii. 20; cxlvii. 15, 18. Isa. lv. 11. It is a messenger giving and imparting admonition: 1 Kings xii. 22. 1 Chron. xvii. 3. Jer. xxvii. 1; xxxiv. 8; xxxvi. 1. To the word of God is ascribed the power of searching and discerning the most secret thoughts of men: Heb. iv. 12. We must not suppose, however, that an enlightened and spiritual Hebrew regarded the *word* of God as a real hypostasis or substantial being, notwithstanding the strong language thus employed respecting it. — Another important circumstance, pertaining to the *usus loquendi* of the Jews at the time when John wrote his Gospel, deserves to be brought distinctly into view. Not far from the beginning of the Christian era, the Targums or translations into Chaldee of the Hebrew Scriptures were made, and committed to writing; of the Pentateuch by Onkelos, and of most of the remaining books by Jonathan ben Uzziel. In these works, and in other Targums, a special idiom prevails respecting the use of the phrase, "word of the Lord;" and it presents some views of the *usus loquendi* of the Jews of that period, which are not only remarkable, but very striking. In my own apprehension, they have an important bearing upon the use of "Logos" in our text. The Chaldee word for "Logos" is מֵימְרָא, a noun with formative מ derived from אֲמַר, *dixit*. To this noun the Targumists subjoin the Gen. דְּיְיָ יְהוָה (abridged דְּיְיָ יְיָ), which then is exactly equivalent to ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ. This expression is employed in the Targums, in cases almost without number, instead of the simple יְהוָה or אֱלֹהִים of the Hebrew text. In particular, wherever the Hebrew represents the Divine Being as in action, or as revealing himself by his works, or by communications to individuals, it is common for the Targumists to say that his *word* operates, or makes the revelation. . . . Strikingly is this idiom illustrated in a later Targum of 2 Chron. xvi. 3.

where the Hebrew runs thus: "There is a league between me and thee;" Targum, "between my word and thy word." Thus מֵימְרָא came, by usage among the Jews, to be employed not only to designate God as acting or making some revelation of himself or of his will, but to be employed as a kind of intensive periphrastic pronoun to designate God himself. The transition was not unnatural. That which is often employed to express *God revealed* may easily come at last to express the idea of *God simply considered*. What now are we to say as to the real nature and design of the idiom in question? Is it *personification*, or does it amount to the assertion of *hypostasis*? If we were to judge of this matter only in view of the leading instances produced above [Exod. xix. 17. Job xlii. 9. Ps. ii. 4. Gen. xxvi. 3; xxxix. 2. Lev. xxvi. 46. Deut. v. 5; xx. 1. Gen. vi. 6; viii. 21], we might be ready to say that it amounts to asserting hypostasis. But, when we compare the idiom in its whole extent, we cannot view the matter in such a light. Even those cases which present "word" in the sense of the reciprocal pronoun cannot be regarded as hypostatically designating a being different from God. In very late Targums there are, indeed, passages which plainly imply a hypostatic use of מֵימְרָא, i.e. *word*; but, in those that were extant in the time of John, we find none which necessarily convey such a meaning. — Abridged from MOSES STUART on John i. 1–18, in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. vii. pp. 18–22.

It has been maintained, that the Jewish Scriptures convey the idea of the Logos in the phrase, "the word of God;" implying that this phrase is the designation of a divine person, with omnipotent power, and that it is identical with the Logos of John. If we rest upon the Scripture alone for the meaning of this epithet, we should undoubtedly come to the conclusion, with some of the most learned critics, that it is only a periphrasis for God, or used as expressive of his active power or his wisdom. It can hardly be maintained, that this term could have conveyed to the Jewish mind the conception of the Word, who was to become incarnate among men. . . . The Jewish Logos and the Logos of Philo are not convertible. So that we cannot derive, from the facts in question, a convincing argument that the Divine Saviour, in his distinct personality and his co-equality with God, was known before the Messiah himself was manifested. And, after Jesus himself appeared, a true knowledge of him was slowly developed. — DR. SETH SWEETSER, *in Biblioth. Sacra for January*, 1854; vol. xi. pp. 103–4.

SECT. III. — THE DOCTRINE OF A TRIUNE GOD, OR OF THE DEITY OF CHRIST, NOT REVEALED OR KNOWN TO THE DISCIPLES BEFORE THE DAY OF PENTECOST.

I do fear, my respected friend, that some of your opinions and reasonings will turn out to be weapons put into the hands of Unitarians. — DR. SAMUEL MILLER.

Christ did not receive testimony from the evangelists, that he was God. — ALPHONSO SALMERON: *Comm. in Evang.*, Prolog. xxvi. tom. i. p. 394.

Nor understood they [our Saviour's own disciples] the mystery of the Sacred Trinity as we do, and many other recondite secrets. — JOHN EVELYN: *The True Religion*, vol. ii. pp. 87–8.

Be they who they would, Gentiles as well as Jews, that applied to him [our Lord], . . . and implored his assistance, if they declared their belief in him as in a person sent from God, he desired no more, and never sent them away without relief. But, as that was not the time for him to declare the utmost extent of his power and authority, and much less the nature of his kingdom which he . . . signified to be just at hand, to show them how he designed to redeem mankind, or to manifest his Divinity in plain and explicit words; so . . . he wrapt them up in mysterious and allegorical expressions. . . . . Though St. Peter more than once confessed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, yet it is certain from the evangelical history, that neither he nor any of the rest of the apostles did then know our Lord to be what he really was. This was the main article which they not only could not then bear, but which was by no means proper to be then clearly revealed. . . . They had such rules given them, for the direction of their conduct, as he expected should be obeyed by those that would profess themselves to be his disciples. Thus they were told what they were to do, and in whom to believe. If they took him to be the Saviour of the world, that was sufficient. But then they were directed, by all that he did and said, to look up to the Father as the sender, and him as the person sent; and still to give the Father the glory in all that they should see the Son at any time do. If they thought him superior to Moses, who was no more than a servant, though "faithful in all his house," whilst he executed the commands of his great Master, whereas our Lord was his Son, to whom he communicated his whole will, they did as much as was then required of them to do. Farther

manifestation of himself would not have suited with that state of humiliation in which he appeared before his passion. This concealment of himself till his resurrection is what the ancient fathers meant by the word "economy," when applied to this subject. — DR. WM. WOTTON: *Disc. on the Omniscience of the Son of God*, pp. 32, 36–8.

Our blessed Lord himself, in compliance probably with the weakness and prejudices of his hearers, says very little, in his discourses, of his own Divinity. This seemed to be one of those things which "they were not as yet able to receive." He constantly calls himself by no other name than the Son of man; nor doth it appear that his disciples, till after his resurrection, St. Peter only excepted, took him for a divine person. . . . Our blessed Lord chose rather to set forth his divine character by his actions than his discourses, and left the fuller declarations of it to be made by his apostles after his ascension. — DR. THOMAS MANGEY: *Plain Notions of our Lord's Divinity*, page 10.

But is it at all probable that Peter would have had the effrontery to rebuke his Master, if he regarded him as Almighty God? In the present connection, the following remarks by Bishop MALTBY (Illust. of the Truth of the Chris. Religion, p. 124), deserve a place: "In the sixteenth chapter of the same evangelist [Matthew], it appears to be intimated, that all the disciples had not fully ascertained, in their own minds, what was the real character of their Master; since only one, in reply to his question upon that point, described him by his true designation. But, immediately afterwards, that same apostle showed his utter ignorance of the nature of that designation, and the entire coincidence of his notions with those of his countrymen, when, in direct opposition to a plain declaration of Jesus concerning his impending sufferings and death, he replied in a tone of impatience and incredulity, 'Be it far from thee, Lord! this shall not be unto thee.'"

"My Lord! and my God!" I do not understand this as an address to Jesus; but thus, "Yes: he it is indeed! He, my Lord, and my God!" Yet, in giving this interpretation, I do not affirm that Thomas passed all at once from the extreme of doubt to the highest degree of faith, and acknowledged Christ to be the true God. This appears to me too much for the then existing knowledge of the disciples; and we have no intimation that they recognized the divine nature of Christ, before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. I am therefore inclined to understand this expression, which broke out from Thomas in the height of his astonishment, in a figurative sense, denoting only, "Whom I shall ever reverence in the highest degree." If he only recollected what he had heard from the mouth of Jesus ten days before (chap. xiv.

9, 10), that recollection might have given occasion to an expression which probably Thomas himself could not have perfectly explained; as is often the case with such words as escape us when we are under the most overpowering surprise. But yet the expression might be equivalent to saying, "He! my Lord! with whom God is most intimately united, and is in him! — in whom I behold God as it were present before me!" Or a person raised from the dead might be regarded as a divinity; for the word "God" is not always used in the strict doctrinal sense. — J. D. MICHAELIS: Anmerk. on John xx. 28; *as quoted by J. P. Smith in Script. Test.*, vol. ii. pp. 68–9.

Many other remarks of a similar character will (D. V.) be introduced into the volume consisting of interpretations of texts in the Gospels.

Now, we shall willingly admit, that the apostles themselves were believers under this idea mostly [namely, that the title "Son of God" denotes the same thing as Messiah or Christ], during our Saviour's residence upon earth; as it is certain they had not the whole mystery of the divine will, the grand scheme of man's redemption, clearly and fully made known to them before our Lord's ascension into heaven. . . . It would be ridiculous to suppose that the apostles could believe their Master to be the Son of God in the highest [the Trinitarian] sense, . . . when "they all forsook him and fled." — WM. HAWKINS: *Discourses on Scripture Mysteries*, pp. 63–4.

Yet this writer says that Jesus frequently asserted his truly divine nature to his disciples, who must have understood him.

We can scarcely think it strange that Jesus should have spoken less clearly and explicitly than his apostles after him, respecting the relation which he bore to God the Father, and that he never declared himself the Creator of the world (an argument apparently in the Socinians' favor), when we consider that a different method would have been unworthy of the divine wisdom, which required that the Jews should be drawn off, by slow degrees, from their too contracted notions respecting the Unity of God, and gradually imbibe just sentiments in relation to the Messiah. — J. F. FLATT: *Dissertation on the Deity of Christ; in Biblical Repertory for* 1829, or new series, vol. i. pp. 174–5.

As it was our blessed Lord's Divinity, which, we have seen, he studiously concealed, but wished all men to come to the knowledge of, &c. — OXFORD OR ANGLICAN DOCTORS: *Tracts for the Times*, No. 80, in vol. iv. p. 38.

It would be unreasonable to expect that this doctrine [the Trinity in Unity] should have been fully revealed till the day of Pentecost. . . . In the histories, therefore, written by those evangelists who confine themselves exclusively to a recital of some leading discourses of our Lord, and to an account of some of his principal miracles, I should expect to find fewer traces of these higher doctrines. In Mr. Belsham's own words, I would ask, "When our Lord was so very cautious in discovering himself to be the Messiah, would he, at the same time, make no hesitation in declaring himself to be 'the very eternal God'?" "What would have been the effect upon the apostles," says he again, "the instant the amazing truth was communicated to them? Their faculties would be absorbed in terror and astonishment; no more free conversation, no more asking of questions, no more attempts to impose upon him, or to rebuke him; the greatest awe and distance would instantaneously take place, and all the endearing and familiar relations of master, instructor, companion, and friend, would at once have been broken off." The little impression which our Saviour's miracles made upon the apostles, and the wavering and unsettled conviction of their minds as to his being the Messiah after all (Luke xxiv. 11, 25), is evident from many passages. Such a frame of mind as this would be incapable of receiving and comprehending doctrines more abstruse, when even the testimony of their senses produced so little effect upon them. I should therefore be prepared to expect that the grand disclosure of Christ's divine nature would not be formally made to them till that period should arrive when they should be "able to bear all things;" which period, from John xvi. 12, 13, we learn to be the epoch of the descent of the Holy Ghost. — DR. LONGLEY, Bishop of Ripon: *The Brothers' Controversy*, pp. 54–7.

It is to be observed, that the Lord Jesus professedly withheld the full manifestation of his doctrines till the period subsequent to his death and resurrection. . . . If we duly consider these features of the early Christian economy, we shall not expect to find a full declaration of the doctrine respecting our Lord's person [meaning, of course, as God-man] in the narratives of the evangelists, or in his own discourses; but we shall rather look for intimations, for principles implied in facts and assertions, and for conclusions from such facts and assertions deduced by minute attention and close examination on our own part. . . . . To demand that this doctrine [that of the pre-existence of Christ], supposing it to be true, should have been taught by our Lord himself, in the most clear and decisive manner, is not reasonable; for

it was of the very genius and character of his ministry, that by it the peculiar doctrines of the Christian dispensation should not be fully unfolded. . . . Jesus himself appears to have plainly insisted, in his own teachings, upon no doctrines but those which were generally admitted by his countrymen as resting on the authority of Moses and the prophets. — DR. J. P. SMITH: *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. i. pp. 429–30, 509.

The relation between the disciples and their divine Master . . . was like that between children and their parents, in this also, that, as they had ever found a ready present help in him for all their wants, he stood in the place of God to them, as a father stands to his child. It is true he also was God. This, however, they knew not: they did not regard him as God, but much more as a man, like, though far superior in power and wisdom, to themselves. — JULIUS CHARLES HARE: *Mission of the Comforter*, vol. i. pp. 9, 10.

See that portion of the present work which treats of the simplicity of our Lord's teachings, pp. 230–8.

Notwithstanding all the constraint and cautiousness observable in some of the extracts just made, the writers cannot help acknowledging, that the Saviour did not teach — that the apostles, during his ministry, did not recognize — that Matthew, Mark, and Luke do not assert — the dogma of a Trinity in Unity, or of any other nature in Jesus Christ than that which was human. But, if these doctrines are of essential importance in the scheme of salvation, or if they constitute a main element in Christianity, as they are represented in the discourses and writings of many theologians, does it not seem strange and incredible, that, while its Founder taught, and in his life exhibited, the great doctrines of the Divine Unity, the Fatherhood of God, and the fraternity of man, he should never have instructed his followers, either by announcement, or through his teachings and his prayers by clear implication, that there were three persons in the one God; and that he himself, though the meek and lowly one, though the guest of publicans and the washer of his disciples' feet, though the disclaimer of absolute goodness, of perfect knowledge, and of independent power, and though acting as the Sent and Anointed of the Father, was at the same time the equal of Jehovah and the same Being, the second person of an infinite and ever-glorious Trinity? And does it not seem equally amazing and incredible, that, if he did express or clearly imply these mysteries, and the apostles, through their Jewish prejudices and the feebleness of their capacities, could not understand or appreciate the knowledge which their Lord imparted, none of the evangelists should in any instance allude to the dulness of the Twelve in being unable to discern his essential Divinity as well as his Messiahship?

SECT. IV. — THE DOCTRINE OF A TRIUNE GOD, OR OF THE DEITY OF CHRIST, NOT DIVULGED IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

You will reveal it.
Not I. SHAKSPEARE.

It is certain that those necessary doctrines of faith [namely, those of the Holy Trinity, the Deity of Christ, &c.] which were but lightly touched upon in the Gospels and the Acts, are distinctly and fully explained in these Epistles. . . . . Most of the choicest and sublimest truths of Christianity are to be met with in the Epistles of the apostles, they being such doctrines as were not clearly discovered and opened in the Gospels and the Acts. — DR. JOHN EDWARDS: *Socinianism Unmasked*, pp. 41, 79.

These passages are taken from one of the books penned by this learned but bitter controversialist against Locke's "Reasonableness of Christianity," and are chiefly aimed at the sentiment expressed by the great philosopher, that it is not in the Epistles of the New Testament, which were written for the resolving of doubts and the reforming of mistakes, but in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, that men are to learn what are the fundamental articles of faith.

St. Luke, . . . in his second treatise, in which he lets us know what the apostles did after they had received the Holy Ghost, tells us how our Lord fulfilled his promise of his future presence; how the apostles, after their receiving of the Holy Ghost, baptized converts, bestowed the gifts of the Spirit upon those that were worthy to receive them, founded churches, and positively declared that there was no other name given under heaven by which men could be saved, but only the name of Jesus Christ. This is what we can chiefly gather from these two books of this evangelist. — DR. WILLIAM WOTTON: *Sermon on the Omniscience of the Son of God*, p. 50.

In that portion of his Sermon which precedes the present extract, Dr. WOTTON says that in St. Matthew's Gospel "we see very little which directly leads us to believe that Jesus Christ was really God." After stating that this evangelist all along pursues ideas suitable to the state of humiliation in which Christ appeared, he goes on to state that St. Mark had constantly in view, and abridges, the Gospel of Matthew; and that St. Luke's narrative, though comprehending much not in the two foregoing evangelists, all tends to the same purpose, namely, that our Saviour was

sent from above to preach the gospel, with full power to save those who should believe in him. After quoting Christ's declaration to his disciples, that "all power was given to him," &c., and his promise, that "he would be with them to the end of the world," the learned writer says that St. Luke goes farther, and, in his second treatise, narrates what the apostles did after they had received the Holy Spirit, according to the extract we have made above. In the contents of his Sermon, when referring to these passages, the writer thus expresses the nature of his sentiments: "Little of the Divinity of the Son of God in St. Matthew, pp. 49, 50; St. Mark and St. Luke follow the same method, p. 50." After perusing WOTTON'S abstract of the Acts of the Apostles, it would not, we think, be an unfair inference for the reader to draw, that Luke must have represented the first preachers of the gospel as saying very "little" indeed "of the Divinity," or, as we would express it, of the Deity, "of the Son of God."

We know how frequently this passage [Matt. xxviii. 19] is quoted as a proof of the doctrine of the Trinity, by many, indeed, who do not believe this doctrine, and wish perhaps to undermine it. I must confess that I cannot see it in this point of view. The eternal Divinity of the Son — which is so clearly taught in other passages, particularly John i. 1–14 and Rom. ix. 5 — is here not once mentioned; and it is impossible to understand from this passage, whether the Holy Ghost is a person. The meaning of Jesus may have been this: Those who were baptized should, upon their baptism, confess that they believed in the Father and in the Son, and in all the doctrines inculcated by the Holy Spirit, — both those which occur in the Old Testament, as well as those which the apostles were to deliver under the influence of divine inspiration, and which as yet they had not learned; that they were to receive and believe these doctrines, and, in one word, embrace the whole divine revelation. In fact, I do not believe that the words in the form of baptism can signify more, because it was impossible, for the majority of those who believed, to think more upon the subject at the time; for they were not regularly instructed in the mystery of the Trinity before baptism, and only received complete instruction in the doctrines of Christianity after baptism. Read only the second chapter of the Acts, where three thousand were baptized in one day. What did these persons know of the Divinity of Christ, of which Peter, in his discourse, did not say one word? What did they know of the personality of the Holy Ghost? They were not doctrines of the Jewish church, which, in the first instance, might be assumed; and yet they are baptized (presuming the apostles to have fulfilled these commands of Jesus) in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. What could they otherwise think but that

they acknowledged, by baptism, Jesus to be the Son of God and the Christ; the gifts of the Holy Ghost (which, as Peter observed, they both saw and heard) to be no delusion, but to descend from heaven; and the doctrines which the apostles were to teach, under the influence of divine inspiration, to be those which they did, and which they ought to, believe? This is the more striking, where, in Acts xvi. 33, it is not to be supposed that the jailer should have known any thing of the eternal Divinity of Christ, and of the personality of the Holy Ghost; or that Paul, in his very short conversation (ver. 32), should have instructed him in it, as we find no traces of it in his first discourses, contained in the thirteenth and seventeenth chapters. — J. D. MICHAELIS: *The Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, pp. 325–7.

It may be mentioned, in passing, that the texts referred to by MICHAELIS, as "clearly teaching" the eternal Divinity of the Son of God (John i. 1–14, Rom. ix. 5, and others), are acknowledged by Trinitarians, of as high a standing, to be either obscure or susceptible of a very different interpretation. These acknowledgments it is intended to place under the texts to which they refer, in future volumes of this work.

We read, in the Acts [ii. 41; iv. 4], of three or five thousand souls being converted in one day, and admitted into the church through baptism. Does this fact possibly allow us to imagine that they were all instructed in the detailed mysteries of religion? . . . . . No more than a general idea of Christianity was given; whereas the important doctrines, and, in some sense, I might say the most important doctrines, . . . of the Trinity, the incarnation, and, above all, that dogma which now-a-days particularly is considered the most vital of all, the atonement on the cross, were not even slightly hinted at, much less communicated, to the new Christian before he was baptized. — CARDINAL WISEMAN: *Lectures on the Principal Doctrines of the Catholic Church*, vol. i. pp. 107, 112.

The claims of Jesus, as advanced by himself, and as first urged by the apostles and the three earlier evangelists, were addressed to Jews, who admitted the authority of the Old Testament, and looked for such a Messiah as it described. Their ignorance, indeed, and their prejudices were very great. It appears from the Gospels, that both the higher orders of the Jews and the mass of the nation had very obscure, and probably inconsistent, notions concerning the Messiah, who was the object of their eager, but generally carnal and worldly, expectation. Yet this expectation rested upon the Holy Scriptures; and it was

proper to remit them to those Scriptures for the rectifying of their errors. It is plain that the immediate object, in the writings of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, was to produce a conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was *the* Messiah announced and described in the prophetic writings; and they evidently left the scrutinizing and application of details to the duty and diligence of their readers. A similar course was followed by the apostles and their fellow-laborers in preaching Christianity, as they regularly communicated to the Jews, in the first instance, the word of life. The converts were directed to "search the Scriptures daily;" they were assured that those Scriptures testified of Christ; and it would follow, of course, that all which they could discover in the inspired writings, concerning the characters, office, and dignity of the Messiah, would be transferred to the person of Jesus of Nazareth. But this would not be a rapid process; and in proportion as they made progress in this study would their knowledge of the truth, in this respect and in all its other branches and relations, become extensive and accurate. . . . I submit to such of my readers as may be competent and inclined to the minute examination of the question, whether this plan of a gradual development, connected with the study and application of the Old Testament, was not, though imperfectly understood and ill expressed, the object really intended by those Christian fathers who maintained that the apostles, in their earlier ministry, refrained from divulging the pre-existence and Divinity of Christ, and that John was the first who advanced this doctrine. Though some of the citations made by Dr. Priestley are by him misconstrued, and others by being detached from their connection appear stronger than they really are, it is undeniable that this opinion was held by ORIGEN, ATHANASIUS, CHRYSOSTOM, and others. — DR. J. P. SMITH: *Script. Test. to the Messiah*, vol. ii. pp. 152–3, 155–6.

It would appear, then, that, instead of delivering to the Jews the dogma of Christ's Supreme Divinity, the apostles, in their oral discourses, endeavored to persuade their countrymen, by an appeal to their Scriptures, that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah; leaving them to discover, by their own study of these writings, that he constituted one of the persons of self-conscious agents in a Triune Godhead; the comparatively obscure prophecies relating to his character and dignity being supposed, in this case, to be plainer and more intelligible than the teachings of the Founder of Christianity himself, and rendering it unnecessary for the apostles to say any thing at all respecting doctrines which have been conceived by many to lie at the very foundation of the gospel, and to form, indeed, its peculiar characteristics!

In the second section of the present chapter, we showed it to have been the conviction of many Trinitarians, that the mysterious doctrines just referred to are not revealed in the Old Testament; and that, though some of the learned Jews may have filled their imaginations with vagaries as to divine powers and hypostatized attributes, the great body of the people had not the slightest expectation that their Messiah would be in nature any thing more than a human being. If this opinion be well founded, — and, so far as the Jews of Palestine are concerned, it seems to be established beyond doubt by the New-Testament records, — we would naturally suppose, that, if the apostles had any knowledge of Trinitarian dogmas, they would have preferred inculcating these in clear and express terms, instead of sending their hearers to passages of the Old Testament, where, enveloped in clouds and figures, they can be discovered only by the lights thrown over them of a previously formed faith; and, even with that faith, sometimes not at all. Indeed, had the apostles acted in the way attributed to them, they would have unquestionably failed in their purposes, and produced a contrary effect. If, for instance, with the view of leading the minds of his hearers to a recognition not only of the divine authority, but of the eternally divine nature, of Christ, Peter had adduced, as in Acts iii. 22 he is reported to have adduced, the prediction uttered by Moses, "A Prophet shall the Lord your God *raise up* unto you, of your brethren, LIKE UNTO ME: him shall ye hear in all things," — he could not have taken a more decisive mode of confirming the Unitarian views which he had himself set forth in his first sermon to the Jews, chap. ii. 22, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, A MAN APPROVED OF GOD among you by miracles and wonders and signs, *which God did by him* in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know." Speaking of the prophecy which Peter quotes from Deut. xviii. 15–19, COLERIDGE, in his "Literary Remains" (Works, vol. v. p. 282), says, "If I could be persuaded that this passage primarily referred to Christ; and that Christ, not Joshua and his successors, was the prophet here promised, — I must either become a Unitarian psilanthropist, and join Priestley and Belsham, or abandon to the Jews their own Messiah as yet to come, and cling to the religion of John and Paul, without further reference to Moses than to Lycurgus, Solon, and Numa; all of whom, in their different spheres, no less prepared the way for the coming of the Lord, 'the desire of the nations.'"

It has been seen that some of the church fathers were forced to acknowledge the Unitarianism of the Book of Acts. Theophilus Lindsey (Sequel, p. 203) quotes CHRYSOSTOM as saying, in one of his Homilies, that "Paul at Athens flatly calls Christ a *man*, and nothing more;" and that, in relation to their conduct towards both Jews and Gentiles, "the apostles use a condescending method and management, the economy of compliance;" that is, though they believed in the essential Deity of Christ, the apostles, for prudential reasons, concealed this important truth from those to whom they announced the gospel. ERASMUS, CALMET, and other Roman Catholics, make concessions of a similar kind.

But such acknowledgments are not confined either to the ancient fathers or to members of the Papal Church. In a Sermon on the "Tendencies of Intellectual Preaching," delivered before the General Convention of Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts, May 26, 1853, Dr. JOHN TODD, of Pittsfield, says (p. 31) that St. Paul, before the Areopagus, "made a great speech, a great intellectual effort," "but said not one word about the cross of Christ;" and that "the results" of that "master's speech" were — "oh, how poor!" That is, unless we misunderstand the drift of the remark, — by declaring to the Athenians the oneness and paternity of the Divine Being, the sole Originator and Governor of the universe; his goodness and mercy in sending his Son Jesus Christ into the world to awaken all men to repentance and spiritual worship; and his equity in constituting one who shared in all the sinless affections of humanity the Judge of the human race, certifying this appointment by raising his Messenger and Representative from the dead, — the great Apostle of the Gentiles, in propounding these sublime and beneficent principles to the idolatrous and the sceptical Athenians, made a sad mistake, because, instead, he did not discourse on innate depravity, a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, the incarnation of the second of these persons, and the modern doctrine of the atonement.

The objection you have made against the doctrine of Christ's divine nature, from its not being more dwelt upon in the Acts of the Apostles, has often presented itself to me; and various are the answers which have occurred to me. Among others, one which I met with a few days since in one of Lord Bolingbroke's Essays seemed reasonable. He thinks it natural (and I like to quote his opinion, as he is a sort of neutral), that St. Paul, when addressing the Gentiles, should have reserved the doctrine of the Trinity for their future instruction, lest he should seem, in any degree, to countenance their favorite polytheism. When they were established in their belief of Christ's divine legation, he would then proceed to unfold this mystery to them. — BISHOP LONGLEY: *The Brothers' Controversy*, pp. 104–5.

In the three preceding sections, Trinitarians acknowledge that God did not reveal himself to the Hebrews as a Triune Being; that, with all the absurd notions of divine emanations which they derived from their intercourse with the Orientals, they knew nothing of a plurality of persons in the Godhead; that, as regards the *nature* of the Deity, the instructions which our Lord imparted were not different from those of Moses and the prophets; that he did not reveal the alleged Divinity of his person to his disciples; that the great object of the evangelists was to establish the Messiahship of their Master; and that the apostles, at least in their earlier preaching, divulged not the mysterious doctrines of Trinitarianism. Thus far, according to the showing of the orthodox themselves, is the dogma of the Trinity defective in Scriptural evidence

SECT. V. — NO DOCTRINES ADDITIONAL TO THOSE PREVIOUSLY TAUGHT BY CHRIST, OR COMMUNICATED ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, INCULCATED IN THE EPISTLES.

Thou, O God, the Father! art invisible: but thy Son, who came to us in human form, was gazed on by human eyes, and he hath declared and exhibited thy character to the world; he being the brightness of thy glory and the express image of thy person. — Dr. Thomas Chalmers.

The gospel of our Saviour is defaced and obscured by affected mysteries, and paradoxes, and senseless propositions; and Christ himself, who was the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person, who in the most plain and perspicuous manner declared the will of God to us, is represented with a thicker veil upon his face than Moses, and the glory of the second covenant is much more obscured with a mist of words than the first was with types and figures. This will appear to any man who shall observe what strange interpretations are commonly made of those texts of Scripture, especially in St. Paul's Epistles, wherein Christ is mentioned; what absurd propositions are built on them, what pernicious consequences drawn from them, to defeat the great ends of Christ's appearing in the flesh. — Dr. William Sherlock: *Knowledge of Christ*, pp. 1, 2.

As for the Epistles, they do chiefly contain confirmations and illustrations of things which are recorded in the Gospels, and repeated persuasions to the practice of that holiness which is recommended by them. — Dr. Thomas Bennet: *Confutation of Popery*, p. 49.

We must not regard the Epistles as communications of religious doctrines not disclosed before; as displaying the perfection of a system of which merely the rude elements had been indicated in the writings of the four evangelists. This address of our Lord to his apostles [John xvi. 12, 13] is commonly alleged in support of the assertion, that additional doctrines were to be propounded in the Epistles. That such cannot be the meaning of the passage, the preceding inquiry as to the several articles of Christian belief has proved. To what particulars, then, did our Saviour allude? That Christ was to be a light to lighten the Gentiles no less than the glory of the people of Israel; that the peculiar privileges of the Jews were at an end; that the Samaritan, the Greek, and the Barbarian were to stand on a level with the Israelite in the Christian church; that Christ did not purpose to

enthrone himself in worldly sovereignty, and to constitute his apostles the great men of the earth; that it was not his will to restore at that time the kingdom to Israel. The post, then, which the Epistles occupy in the sacred depository of revelation is not that of communications of new doctrines. They fill their station as additional records, as inspired corroborations, as argumentative concentrations, as instructive expositions, of truths already revealed, — of commandments already promulgated. In the explication of moral precepts, the Epistles frequently enter into large and highly beneficial details. — Abridged from GEORGE TOWNSEND: *The New Testament Arranged*, part xii. note 10.

But this writer maintains that the doctrine of a Triune God, and of the Deity of Christ, was revealed in the Old Testament and in the Gospels.

The latest writings of these three great apostles — Paul, Peter, and John — contain no traces of any other more mysterious doctrines than they had received from our Lord, and taught to their first converts at the beginning of the gospel. . . . . It may be safely said, that whatever we find in the New Testament, as to a gradual communication of Christian truth, relates to this one point, — that the disciples were to be led on gently to a full sense of the unimportance of the ceremonies of the Jewish law. Christianity was given complete, as to its own truths, from the beginning of the gospel; but the absolute sufficiency of these truths, and the needlessness of any other system as joined with them, was to be learned only by degrees; and, unhappily, it never was learned fully. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *The Church*, III.; *in Miscellaneous Works*, pp. 35–7.

Christ had many things to say of his doctrine which the disciples were not then in a condition to understand. But he was just about to leave them; and therefore he pointed them to the Spirit of Truth, which was to unfold all the truth he had proclaimed. It was not to announce any *new* doctrine, but to open the truth of *his* doctrine, to glorify him in them, by developing the full sense of what he had taught them. — AUGUSTUS NEANDER on John xvi. 12–14; *in Life of Jesus Christ*, p. 401.

As we have already noticed, some theologians have thought that our Lord did not teach the doctrines which are now called orthodox, because his disciples were not as yet able to receive them, but that he left these doctrines to be imparted by the Holy Spirit to the apostles, and by them to be developed in their oral and written discourses. We have, however, no reason to believe, that the only-begotten Son, who was commissioned to

reveal the will of the Father, concealed, while on earth, any of the essential principles of his religion; but rather, on the contrary, that he had made known all things which he had heard of the Father, John i. 18; xv. 15. The "many things" which he says (chap. xvi. 12) his disciples were not capable of bearing did not at all relate to the essence of God, of himself, or of the Holy Ghost, respecting which the apostles never speak; but, as the words are interpreted by the best Trinitarian commentators, to the abolition of the ceremonial law, the rejection of the Jewish nation, and the calling of the Gentiles, — matters which Jesus had indeed sufficiently intimated, but had not openly or directly communicated. In his "Illustrations of the Truth of the Christian Religion," pp. 215–16, Bishop MALTBY well remarks: "The universality of the new dispensation, the qualifications of its future members, added to the demolition of the temple at Jerusalem, with the ruin of the Jewish polity, might have made a nation, not entirely blinded by former views, understand that the law was to be absorbed in the gospel. This, however, was not the case. . . This was one of the most delicate points upon which the discourses of our Lord could turn; yet even this offensive truth he did not entirely conceal, though he touched upon it with the utmost circumspection."

No one perhaps will maintain that there is any new truth of Christianity set forth in the Epistles; any truth, I mean, which does not presuppose the whole truth of human salvation by Jesus Christ, as already determined and complete. The Epistles clearly imply that the work of salvation is done. They repeat and insist on its most striking parts; urging chiefly on man what remains for him to *do*, now that Christ has done all that God purposed, in behalf of man, before the foundation of the world. Let the experiment be fairly tried; let the inveterate idea, that the Epistles are the doctrinal portion of Scripture, be for a while banished from the mind; and let them be read simply as the works of our fathers in the faith, — of men who are commending us rather to the love of Christ than opening our understanding to the mysteries of divine knowledge; and, after such an experiment, let each decide for himself, whether the practical or the theoretic view of the Epistles is the correct one. For my part, I cannot doubt but that the decision will be in favor of the practical character of them. The speculating theologian will perhaps answer by adducing text after text from an Epistle, in which he will contend that some dogmatic truth, some theory or system, or peculiar view of divine truth, is asserted. But "what is the chaff to the wheat?" I appeal from the logical criticism of the apostle's words to their apostolical spirit, — from Paul philosophizing to Paul preaching and entreating and persuading. And I ask, whether it is likely that an

apostle would have adopted the form of an epistolary communication for imparting mysterious propositions to disciples with whom he enjoyed the opportunity of personal intercourse, and to whom he had already "declared the whole counsel of God;" whether, in preaching Christ, he would have used a method of communicating truth which implies some scientific application of language, — an analysis, at least, of propositions into their terms, — in order to its being rightly understood. And I further request it may be considered whether it was not by such a mode of inference from the Scripture language, as would convert the Epistles into textual authorities on points of controversy, that the very system of the scholastic theology was erected. — BISHOP HAMPDEN: *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 374–5.

The Epistles of St. Paul were manifestly directed to different churches, and were intended merely to silence doubts or answer difficulties proposed by them, and also to correct and amend some accidental or local corruptions; and, if we examine them carefully, we shall find that the greater portion of our most important dogmas, instead of St. Paul's defining and explaining them, are only occasionally, parenthetically, and as illustrations, introduced. — CARDINAL WISEMAN: *Lectures on the Doctrines of the Catholic Church*, vol. i. p. 59.

We cannot believe, as Schneckenburger does, that James wrote the Epistle at a time when Christianity had not thoroughly penetrated his spiritual life; because there is no proof that his doctrinal views were enlarged at a later period. Nor do we imagine, that any of the apostles, after the day of Pentecost, became still more enlightened in their view of divine things. Their doctrinal development seems complete after that crisis. — DR. SAMUEL DAVIDSON: *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. iii. p. 315.

Agreeably to the extracts made in pp. 351–5, many eminent Trinitarians distinctly confess that our Lord was reserved in his communications respecting the alleged Divinity of his nature; or, in other words, that he did not inculcate the contradictory doctrine of his equality and identity with the Father and the Holy Ghost. In this and the preceding section (p. 356, *sqq.*), we have shown, from other authorities equally orthodox and respectable, that the apostles did not promulgate any new or additional truths: whence it indisputably follows, that, if the writers quoted have taken a proper view of the subject, — as, with some slight abatements from expressions necessarily used by Trinitarians, there is every reason to believe that they have, — neither Jesus Christ nor his apostles taught the popular dogma of the Trinity.

SECT. VI. — A TRIUNE GOD, AND THE DEITY OF CHRIST, NOT DOCTRINES OF EXPRESS REVELATION.

It is reasonable to expect, that those doctrines which form the leading articles of any system should be plainly stated in the book which professes to make that system known. — DR. WARDLAW.

The more you recede from the Scriptures by inferences and consequences, the more weak and dilute are your positions. — LORD BACON.

The word "homoousian" is not found in the Sacred Writings; and therefore, from these alone, what the Arians deny cannot be taught or proved, except by inference. . . . . If the name "God" is clearly added to the Holy Spirit in the canonical books, as it is frequently annexed to the Father, rarely to the Son, in the Gospels and Epistles, I shall acknowledge myself mistaken. — ERASMUS: *Opera Omnia*, tom. ix. pp. 1034, 1173.

The procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son, the equality of the three persons in one substance, and the distinction of the same by relative properties, are not expressed in the Sacred Writings. — MELCHIOR CANUS: *Theol.*, lib. iii. c. 3, fund. 2; *apud Sandium*, p. 5.

It is to be observed, that certain articles are set before us as necessary to faith and salvation, but which are not expressly and clearly contained in the Sacred Books, and which cannot be infallibly deduced from them; and are therefore admitted only because the ancient and primitive church received them in this sense in councils and creeds, and in the writings of the fathers. I will subjoin examples: 1st, We believe that God is one in essence and substance, and three in personality and subsistence; but Scripture does not expressly open up this distinction, or show it by undoubted inference, &c. — MASENIUS: *Medit Concord.*; *apud Sandium*, pp. 7, 8.

It is nowhere, we confess, said expressly, and in so many words, "The Holy Spirit is the Most High God." — HERMAN WITSIUS: *Dissertations on the Creed*, Diss. xxiii. 16.

Similarly, JEREMY TAYLOR, in Works, vol. xiii. pp. 143–4, who, with WITSIUS and other Trinitarians, means, of course, by the "Holy Spirit," a third person in the Godhead. In vol. vi. p. 510, the bishop, with great good sense, says what is very applicable to the subject of the present section: "God hath plainly and literally described all his will, both in belief and practice, in which our essential duty, the duty of all men, is concerned. . . . In plain expressions we are to look for our duty, and not in the more secret places and dark corners of the Scripture."

Our belief in the Trinity, the co-eternity of the Son of God with his Father, the proceeding of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, ... these, with such other principal points, ... are in Scripture nowhere to be found by express literal mention; only deduced they are out of Scripture by collection. — RICHARD HOOKER: *Ecclesiastical Polity*, book i. chap. xiv. 2; *in Works*, vol. i. p. 187.

There are many things, which, although they are not read expressly and definitely in Holy Scripture, yet, by the common consent of all Christians, are attained from it. For instance, "That in the ever-blessed Trinity three distinct persons are to be worshipped, — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, — and that each of these is very God, and yet that there is only one God; that Christ is θεάνθρωπος, very God and very man in one and the same person." — BISHOP BEVERIDGE; *apud Tracts for the Times*, No. 77, in vol. iii. p. 30.

It must be owned, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is proposed in our Articles, our Liturgy, our Creeds, is not in so many words taught us in the Holy Scriptures. What we profess in our prayers we nowhere read in Scripture, — that the one God, the one Lord, is not one only person, but three persons in one substance. There is no such text in the Scripture as this, that "the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped." No one of the inspired writers hath expressly affirmed, that in the Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another, but the whole three persons are co-eternal together and co-equal. But, &c. — BISHOP SMALRIDGE: *Sixty Sermons*; No. XXXIII. p. 348.

It is not pretended that these doctrines [the Divinity of Christ and the Holy Ghost] are plainly contained in every text of Scripture which speaks of them, but only that in some one text or more they are proposed to us convincingly and clearly; and, if a truth be once delivered so clearly as to leave no doubt, it is the same thing to us, who acknowledge the divine authority of all parts of Scripture, as if it were many times there repeated. For example, were there no other text for the proof of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, in the sense in which the church of God hath always professed to believe it, but that only where our Saviour commands his disciples to "baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost" (Matt. xxviii. 19), or that where St. John speaks of the "three witnesses in heaven" (1 John v. 7), either of these texts would be sufficient to make that doctrine an evident part of Scripture, though, in all the other passages usually produced for it, it should be allowed to be expressed obscurely

Again: Neither is it pretended that these doctrines are anywhere, throughout the whole Bible, expressed with the utmost degree of evidence and clearness which words are anyways possibly capable of, but only that they are so expressed that an honest, impartial mind cannot well miss the sense of them. It might have been said, indeed, in so many words, that Christ and the Holy Spirit were, from all eternity, distinct from the Father, and, together with him, one God blessed for ever, and equally the objects of our religious worship and service. But, though this be not said there in so many terms, it is said, however, in such as an unbiased, well-meaning man cannot mistake. — BISHOP ATTERBURY: *Sermons and Discourses;* No. X. in vol. iii. p. 157–8.

Here it is distinctly conceded, that the Trinity, and the Deity of Christ and of the Holy Ghost, are not anywhere expressed in the Bible with the utmost evidence and clearness; though at the same time it is implied, that, in some one text or more, they are delivered *so* clearly as to leave, in the minds of those who acknowledge the divine authority of all parts of Scripture, no doubt of the truth of these doctrines. Two passages, unquestionably the clearest that could be found, are adduced by way of example; namely, Matt. xxviii. 19, which contains the formula of baptism; and 1 John v. 7, which speaks of three heavenly witnesses. The very citing, however, of such texts is, we think, a tacit acknowledgment that there is not one passage in the whole compass of the Bible — from the first verse of Genesis to the last in the Apocalypse — which, with the slightest degree of clearness, expresses the proposition, that there are three persons in one God. We do not deny, that, by taking for granted the truth of the doctrine of the Deity of Christ, and of another person different from the Father and the Son, we may, with some show of reason, suppose a reference made in Matt. xxviii. 19 and 1 John v. 7 to that doctrine; without, however, having good ground for deducing it from thence. But it seems impossible for any man, with a due regard to propriety of language, to assert that Christ, in the former passage, and John, or his interpolator, in the latter, designed to EXPRESS, even with the lowest degree of "clearness," that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet they are not three Gods, but one God. See pp. 10, 11, 218–19 [4], 225 [9], 357–8, 371.

The texts here spoken of will be considered more at length, in their respective places, in future volumes.

I said, and I still say, that it was their common principle [the principle of the Platonizing fathers], that the existence of the Son flows necessarily from the divine intellect exerted on itself. I showed how the Son's eternity will follow from this principle. And I discovered, what indeed I might have concealed, that I myself concur in this principle with the Platonists; for I said that it seems to me to be

founded in Scripture. by which I meant not to assert that it is so expressly declared in Scripture, that I would undertake to prove it by the Scriptures to others, in the same manner that I would undertake to prove that the world was created by Jesus Christ. . . . Upon such points, the evidence of Holy Scripture is, indeed, the only thing that amounts to proof. — BISHOP HORSLEY: Disq. IV., *Tracts*, pp. 460–1.

In the same disquisition, the learned bishop soundly berates Dr. Priestley for his ignorance, in not knowing that this demonstration of the Son's eternal existence had been laid down not only by some of the Platonic fathers, but by the Romish church after the Council of Trent, and also by MELANCTHON. Though evidently a favorite opinion of the bishop's, he has the good sense to make no attempt to prove it from the Bible, but rather ac knowledges that it is not "expressly declared in Scripture."

It may startle those who are but acquainted with the popular writings of this day, yet I believe the most accurate consideration of the subject will lead us to acquiesce in the statement as a general truth, that the doctrines in question [that is, the doctrines of the Trinity, the incarnation, and the atonement] have never been learned merely from Scripture. Surely the Sacred Volume was never intended, and was not adapted, to teach us our creed. However, certain it is, that we can prove our creed from it, when it has once been taught us, and in spite of individual producible exceptions to this general rule. From the very first, the rule has been, as a matter of fact, for the church to teach the truth, and then appeal to the Scripture in vindication of its own teaching; and, from the first, it has been the error of heretics to neglect the information provided for them, and to attempt of themselves a work to which they are unequal, — the eliciting a systematic doctrine from the scattered notices of the truth which Scripture contains. — JOHN HENRY NEWMAN: *Arians of the Fourth Century*, p. 55; *apud Wiseman's Lectures*, vol. i. p. 113.

The sublime truths which it [the Athanasian Creed, so called] contains are not expressed in the language of Holy Scripture; nor could they possibly have been so expressed, since the inspired writers were not studious minutely to expound inscrutable mysteries. Neither can it plead any sanction from high antiquity, or even traditional authority; since it was composed many centuries after the time of the apostles, in a very corrupt age of a corrupt church, and composed in so much obscurity that the very pen from which it proceeded is not certainly known to us. — GEORGE WADDINGTON: *History of the Church*, pp. 220–1.

This doctrine [that of a Trinity in the Unity of the Godhead] is not dogmatically revealed to us in any express sentence setting it forth to our belief in so many formal terms; but results rather, as a real truth of revelation, from the concurrent evidence of a variety of passages, in which the Deity is represented as performing offices for the good of man under three distinct hypostases or persons. — BISHOP HAMPDEN: *Essay on the Philosophical Evidence of Christianity*, pp. 158–9.

How can a doctrine be called "a real truth of revelation," when it is the result merely of our own reasonings from a collection of passages, which, if they proved any thing in the Trinitarian direction, would prove either too much or too little for Trinitarianism, — either that the Deity bore only three relations to his creatures, whereas he is represented in Scripture as sustaining a great variety of characters; or that he manifested himself to men as three distinct Beings or Gods, in opposition to the united voices of nature and revelation? For, unless Holy Writ expressly and unambiguously declares that three distinct divine persons constitute only one God, we must infallibly be led, by the course of reasoning adopted, to one or the other of the alternatives mentioned.

The doctrine of the Trinity is rather a doctrine of inference and of indirect intimation, deduced from what is revealed respecting the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and intimated in the notices of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, in the form of baptism, and in some of the apostolic benedictions, than a doctrine directly and explicitly declared. . . . . We have now come to the limit of explicit revelation, and are entering upon the region of reason and inference. . . . I admit that we have not the same clear light to conduct us which we have hitherto enjoyed. I admit that a doctrine of inference ought never to be placed on a footing of equality with a doctrine of direct and explicit revelation. It is very obvious, that, in so far as our belief of any doctrine is the result of inference, it is not an exercise of faith in the testimony of God, but in the accuracy of our own reasoning. . . That the Holy Spirit is a distinct person from the Father and the Son seems to be removed one step from a direct, explicit revelation, by the necessity of previously determining that a being capable of willing, choosing, designing, commanding, forbidding, of loving, being displeased or grieved, and other particulars of a similar nature, is to be regarded as a person. That there are three persons in the Godhead is a second remove from explicit, direct revelation; because, after defining what we mean by a person, and finding that the Father is thus determined to be a person, and also the Son and the Spirit, while

yet we believe that there is only one God, we infer from the whole that there are three persons in one God. — JAMES CARLILE: *Jesus Christ the Great God our Saviour*, pp. 81, 369.

What shall we say, when we consider that a case of doctrine, necessary doctrine, the very highest and most sacred, may be produced where the argument lies as little on the surface of Scripture — where the proof, though most conclusive, is as indirect and circuitous — as that for Episcopacy, viz., the doctrine of the Trinity? Where is this solemn and comfortable mystery formally stated in Scripture, as we find it in the creeds? Why is it not? Let a man consider whether all the objections which he urges against the Scripture argument for Episcopacy may not be turned against his own belief in the Trinity. It is a happy thing for themselves that men are inconsistent; yet it is miserable to advocate and establish a principle, which, not in their own case indeed, but in the case of others who learn it of them, leads to Socinianism. . . . . A person who denies the apostolical succession of the ministry, because it is not clearly taught in Scripture, ought, I conceive, if consistent, to deny the Godhead of the Holy Ghost, which is nowhere literally stated in Scripture. . . . If the Lord's Supper is never distinctly called a sacrifice, or Christian ministers are never called priests, still let me ask, is the Holy Ghost ever expressly called God in Scripture? Nowhere: we infer it from what is said; we compare parallel passages. — OXFORD OR ANGLICAN DOCTORS: *Tracts for the Times*, No. 45, in vol. i. p. 4; and No. 85, in vol. v. p. 11.

The Bible tells us of the Trinity in separate portions only; for out of the single propositions it has not even formed any general and conjunct proposition that is comprehensive of them all, the only semblance of this being contained in that verse of the three bearing record in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and those three being one; which, by the generality of critics, is now admitted to have been the importation of a formal deliverance from some of the compends of orthodoxy. — DR. THOMAS CHALMERS: *Institutes of Theology*, vol. ii. (*Posthumous Works*, vol. viii.) p. 435.

This doctrine [the doctrine of the Trinity] does not strictly belong to the fundamental articles of the Christian faith; as appears sufficiently evident from the fact, that it is expressly held forth in no one particular passage of the New Testament; for the only one in which this is done — the passage relating to the three that bear record (1 John v.) — is undoubtedly spurious, and in its ungenuine shape testifies to the fact how foreign such a collocation is from the style of

the New-Testament Scriptures. We find in the New Testament no other fundamental article besides that of which the apostle Paul says, that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, the annunciation of Jesus as the Messiah; and Christ himself designates, as the foundation of his religion, the faith in the only true God, and in Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, John xvii. 3. What Paul styles distinctively the mystery relates in no one instance to what belongs to the hidden depths of the divine essence, but to the divine purpose of salvation which found its accomplishment in a fact. But that doctrine presupposes, in order to its being understood in its real significancy for the Christian consciousness, this fundamental article of the Christian faith; and we recognize therein the essential contents of Christianity, summed up in brief, as may be gathered from the determinate form which is given to Theism by its connection with this fundamental article. It is this doctrine by which God becomes known as the original Fountain of all existence; as he by whom the rational creation, that had become estranged from him, is brought back to the fellowship with him; and as he in the fellowship with whom it from thenceforth subsists, — the threefold relation in which God stands to mankind, as primal ground, mediator, and end; Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; in which threefold relation the whole Christian knowledge of God is completely announced. — AUGUSTUS NEANDER: *General History of the Church*, vol. i. p. 572.

The doctrine of the Trinity is not a fundamental article of the Christian religion, for it is not expressed in any one passage of the New-Testament Scriptures; but a belief in the only true God, and in Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, is the very foundation of Christianity, and pervades these writings. So says NEANDER. Should not, therefore, the "Christian consciousness" accept the fundamental article of the Christian faith, which forms the great principle of Unitarianism, and reject the very idea of there being three persons, individuals, agents, beings, characters, or relations, in one God?

It must be recollected that the Scriptures do not furnish, ready formed, a systematic and scientific statement of the doctrine in question [the doctrine of the Trinity]. — PROFESSOR SHEDD: *Introductory Essay to Coleridge's Works*, vol. i. pp. 41–2.

To solve the problem, how a dogma which is not systematically stated in the Scriptures could be derived from them, the learned professor says that "the orthodox mind" brought into the controversy with the "heterodox" "an antecedent interpreting idea." He adds, however, what we

might expect from a Trinitarian who has uttered an unwelcome admission, that this idea of the Trinity was "not entirely independent of the Scriptures."

The proper inquiry would seem to be, What view of this matter [the divine Tripersonality] is, on the whole, most in accordance with the teaching of Scripture? In the absence of any direct positive testimony on the point, what may be fairly and legitimately *inferred* from what the Bible does affirm respecting the Divine Being? — JOSEPH HAVEN, Jun., *in the New Englander for February*, 1850; vol. viii. (new series, vol. ii.) p. 2.

Though he regards the doctrine of the Trinity as one merely of inference, this writer says that the Scriptures, in the plainest terms, assert the Unity of God, and the Divinity of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

We opened this section with an appropriate motto from Dr. WARDLAW'S "Discourses on the Socinian Controversy," and would close it with the equally appropriate remarks of Dr. CHALMERS ("Institutes of Theology," book iii. chap. ix. § 23, 28), adding a few words by way of illustration: "In every book of moral or doctrinal instruction, it is natural to expect that the most important truth will be the most pervading; that just in proportion to its value will be the frequency of its recurrence, or the number of passages wherewith, by direct avowal or by implication and allusion, it is in any way interwoven. . . . Like the cheap and common beauties of nature, will not the great qualities of Christian truth both be so placed and so disseminated that the eye might easily see and the hand might readily apprehend them?"

To apply the remarks of these eminent writers: From the concessions made, it has been seen that the doctrine of a Triune God is not "plainly stated" in the Bible; that it is not "so placed and so disseminated that the eye may easily see and the hand readily apprehend" it; that, in short, it is a doctrine of mere inference, and not of express revelation, there being no passage in the Sacred Writings in which it is expressly mentioned. But, if this doctrine was true, and was of so astonishing a character as to be entirely out of the province of reason to discover it, as is almost universally admitted, it would surely be "reasonable" and "natural to expect" that it would "pervade" the Bible, not only "by implication and allusion," so readily taken for granted when the mind of a reader is prepossessed with the value of an hypothesis, but by "direct avowal;" and "that just in proportion to its value" would "be the frequency of its recurrence," in terms as clear and express, at least, as those of human creeds and confessions; rendering altogether unnecessary the laborious process of collecting and collating passages, some of them of a dark and dubious character, and drawing from them conclusions mysterious and unintelligible, if not revolting to reason.

SECT. VII. — THE DOCTRINE OF A TRIUNE GOD, AND OF THE DEITY OF CHRIST, CANNOT BE PROVED FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE.

They [the proofs] had need be both full and clear, before a doctrine of this nature [that of the Trinity] can be pretended to be proved by them. — BISHOP BURNET.

I hope the Romanists will not disadvantage the catholic cause so much as to confess that the Godhead of Christ . . . cannot be proved by Scripture, and that the fathers were forced to fly to unwritten traditions for proof of it. — DR. RICHARD FIELD.

It would appear that the good doctor betrayed his own fears for the validity and soundness of the evidence in favor of the Deity of Christ, and therefore, as the orthodox themselves reason, of the Trinity in Unity; for, as we shall immediately show, Roman Catholics have often indeed "confessed that the Godhead of Christ," with its accompanying dogmas, "cannot be proved by Scripture;" thus "disadvantaging" the cause of Trinitarianism, as acknowledged and deplored in the following passage by the excellent JEREMY TAYLOR, in "Dissuasive from Popery," part ii. book i. sect. iii. 1:—

"I cannot but observe and deplore the sad consequents of the Roman doctors' pretension, that this 'great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh,' relies wholly upon unwritten traditions; for the Socinians, knowing that tradition was on both sides claimed in this article, please themselves in the concession of their adversaries, that this is not to be proved by Scripture. So they allege the testimony of ECCIUS, and Cardinal HOSIUS, one of the legates, presiding at Trent: 'Doctrinam de trino et uno Deo, esse dogma traditionis, et ex Scripturâ nullâ ratione probari posse.' The same was affirmed by TANNER, and all that were on that side, in the conference at Ratisbon, by HIERONYMUS à S. HYACINTHO, and others."

Bishop TAYLOR here uses in the Trinitarian sense the phrase, "God manifested in the flesh;" referring it to the dogma of the incarnation of a being called God the Son, which Unitarians regard as entirely unscriptural.

We believe the doctrine of a Triune God, because we have received it by tradition, though not mentioned at all in Scripture. — Abridged from CARDINAL HOSIUS: *Conf. Cathol. Fidei Christ.*, cap. 27.

That the Holy Spirit should be adored, that the Son is consubstantial with the Father, and of the same nature, &c., we do not perceive so set forth in Scripture that heretics can be convinced without the church acting as interpreter. — POSSEVIN; *apud Sandium*, p. 5.

Concerning the Trinity, whether there are three really distinct persons; concerning the eternal ὁμοούσια, the generation of the Son from the substance of the Father, the equality of the persons in the Godhead, the two natures in Christ, and the Deity of the Holy Spirit, the church ought to determine: the Scriptures cannot. — COPPENSTEIN; *apud Sandium*, pp. 5, 6.

Those [the Lutherans and Calvinists] who bind themselves to Scripture alone, that is, to written words, and who do not set up any other rule or law of belief, sweat to no purpose, and are conquered by their own weapons, as often as they join battle with such pests [the Antitrinitarians] as conceal and defend themselves likewise with the language of Scripture alone. And we know from history that this frequently happened to them in the conferences and disputes into which they entered with the Photinians and the Arians. — PETAVIUS: *De Trin.*, lib. iii. cap. xi. § 9; *Theol. Dog.*, tom. ii. p. 301.

That the Son is of the same essence as the Father, or consubstantial with him, is not manifest in any part of Sacred Scripture, either in express words or by certain and immutable deduction. . . . Not in express language, because this phrase, "of the same essence," never occurs in the Sacred Writings; nor by infallible deduction, because nothing of such a character can by any means rest on reason and Scripture which is at variance with Scripture itself, and the principles of reason. . . . . They believe those matters which are propounded by Athanasius in the Creed on the Trinity, both as respects the distinction of persons and of the divine nature, and the equality of its attributes, and as respects also the divine processions; Christ begotten by the Father from eternity, the Holy Ghost not begotten, but proceeding from both, nor only from either. These and other opinions of the Protestants no one can prove from irrefragable deduction from the Sacred Writings, the traditionary word of God being laid aside. This request has often been made, but no one has made it good. Scripture itself would in many places have seemed to exhibit the opposite, unless the church had taught us otherwise. — MASENIUS; *apud Sandium*, pp. 9–11.

It is obvious, that, if any articles are particularly necessary to be known and believed, they are those which point to the God whom we are to adore, and the moral precepts which we are to observe. Now, is it demonstratively evident, from mere Scripture, that Christ is God, and to be adored as such? Most modern Protestants of eminence answer no. — DR. JOHN MILNER: *End of Religious Controversy*, Let. 9, p. 76.

As to faith, we should be almost ready to retract every word that we have written, if a well-attested case could be proved to us of any one, left to learn religion from the Bible, having hence deduced the doctrine of the Trinity, or of one only God in three real persons; or that of the Divinity of our Lord, in its true sense, as consubstantial to

the Father, as being one in person, and having two perfect natures. These are the two dogmas which the church has considered essential to salvation, and fundamental of all revealed religion; yet we feel confident that no single person has ever discovered these for himself in the Bible, and that they are only believed by Bible Christians (where they *are* believed) in consequence of a self-deceit or self-imposition in fancying that they hold on Scripture evidence what in reality they only maintain because they have been so taught in church, that is, on the evidence of their clergyman. — DUBLIN REVIEW FOR OCTOBER, 1852; *as quoted in Christian Examiner for Jan.* 1853.

To the same purport, — according to Locke, in his "Commonplace Book," — BELLARMINE, GORDONIUS HUNLÆIUS, GRETSER, TANNER, VEGA, and WIEKUS. Several other Roman Catholics are referred to by Sandius (in his "Scriptura S. Trinitatis Revelatrix," pp. 4–17) as speaking to the same effect.

It is a curious anomaly in the history of religious sects, that, in their discussions with Roman Catholics, Trinitarian Protestants are wont to contend earnestly for the due exercise of the intellectual powers in matters pertaining to theology and religion; but, in their zealous warfare with their fellow-Protestants the Unitarians, they not unfrequently accuse them of leaning too much to their own understandings, and of rejecting the plain instructions of Sacred Scripture, because, in the honest use of their rational faculties, the believers in the simple oneness of God have come to a conclusion different from theirs. More curious still, many of the very persons who thus act so inconsistently, are, as we have shown in the sixth section of the present chapter, obliged, from the force of truth, to acknowledge that the doctrines which they espouse, and which they assert to be essential to salvation, are not directly set forth in the pages of the Bible, but must be gathered by a sort of inferential proof, arising from the use, or rather from the abuse, of that reason which they so frequently represent as at war with the doctrines of Holy Writ. It is also a remarkable fact, that the Roman Catholic has often triumphed over his Protestant antagonist by demonstrating that the great principle of Protestantism — the right of individuals to interpret Scripture, without resting on tradition and the authority of the church — inevitably leads to Unitarianism. Witness the discussions of the BELLARMINES, the PETAVII, and the MASENII, with the Trinitarian Reformers of their day; the MAGUIRES, the HUGHESES, the FRENCHES, and the WISEMANS, with ministers of the Established Church of England: and the learned divines of the Puseyite school with the "evangelical" section of their own church.

CHAPTER VII.

GOD IS ONE. — THE FATHER ONLY, THE TRUE GOD.

SECT. I. — THE EXISTENCE OF A TRIUNE GOD NOT DISCERNIBLE BY THE LIGHT OF NATURE.

What more could fright my faith than Three in One? — DRYDEN.

BY the light of nature we may discern the existence, the unity, and the providence of God, but not in respect to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; for the mystery of the Trinity is completely hidden from our natural light. — SALMERON: *Commentarii*, tom. iv. p. 505.

From the principles of nature the Trinity cannot be made known to us. — THEODORE HACKSPAN: *Notæ in Difficilia Scripturæ Loca*, tom. i. p. 534.

What is there in the whole Book of God that nature, at first sight, doth more recoil at than the doctrine of the Trinity? How many do yet stumble and fall at it! — DR. JOHN OWEN: *Divine Origin of the Scriptures*, p. 132.

Though the Divinity be as to his nature one in essence, yet that he is three in hypostasis we believe, not from any thing our reason dictates, but from the word of God, and therefore by an act of pure faith; nor discovered to the world by any light of nature, but supernaturally revealed in time, and necessarily, since revealed, to be believed. — JOHN EVELYN: *The True Religion*, vol. i. p. 119.

We cannot subscribe to the opinion of such of our theologians as have endeavored to prove, to confirm, and by tedious similitudes to illustrate, this mystery, by arguments derived from nature..... The doctrine of the Trinity, we confess, is a mystery which man, how distinguished soever for wisdom and industry, could not discover by the mere consideration of himself and the creatures. — HERMAN WITSIUS: *Dissertations on the Apostles' Creed*, Diss. vi. 5, 15.

"God" is the name of a being absolutely perfect; and the light of nature teaches us that there is but one such Supreme Being, or but one God; but nature does not teach us that there are three divine persons, who are this one God. — DR. WM. SHERLOCK: *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, p. 216.

Thus much I confess, that, take the thing [that one nature may subsist in three persons] abstract from divine revelation, there is nothing in reason able to prove that there is such a thing; but, &c. — DR. ROBERT SOUTH: *Sermons*, vol. iv. p. 288.

It is a vain attempt to go about to prove this [the doctrine of three persons in one divine essence] by reason; for it must be confessed, that we should have had no cause to have thought of any such thing, if the Scriptures had not revealed it to us. — BISHOP BURNET: *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, Art. I. p. 42.

The doctrine of the Trinity . . . cannot be learned from the light of nature; for then we should certainly be able to behold some traces or footsteps thereof in the works of creation and providence, that so this might be understood thereby, as well as the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as the cause is known by its effect. — DR. THOMAS RIDGLEY: *Body of Divinity*, vol. i. p. 230.

Where is the people to be found, where the individual, who learned the doctrine of the Trinity from the works of nature? I cannot suppose it would ever have suggested itself to a single mind, had it not been communicated, probably among the earliest revelations of God. — ROBERT HALL: *Letter* 68; *in Works*, vol. iii. p. 274.

But we have seen there is no evidence that ever such a revelation was made.

If a man were to hold a protracted correspondence by letter with a stranger, that correspondence would reveal feeling, judgment, reason, passion, imagination, and all the other natural properties of the man; because the contents of his person will both yield, and dominate in, the matter of the correspondence, and will thus appear in the revelation made by it. Now, the world of nature is to God's person what the letter is to man; and is it not remarkable, that this world of nature — looked upon, studied, and lived in, for four thousand years — had awakened no suspicion or thought of a threefold nature in its Author (excepting perhaps in the questionable instance of the Platonic Trinity), and has not even to this day? If there were any such constitutional metaphysical threeness in the divine nature, is it credible that an expression of God, so vast and manifold, would not have made even

a conspicuous show of it? I state no such conclusion. . . . I state a simple fact, for which I am not responsible. — HORACE BUSHNELL: *Christ in Theology*, p. 166.

With all the temerity of speculation, it has been reserved, we believe, for the nineteenth century to demonstrate so abstruse and incomprehensible a doctrine as that of the Triune nature of God. It had been attempted before to show, that such a tenet was not inconsistent with reason; and so far as it is practicable, in this way, to remove the difficulties which the mind encounters in assenting, on mere authority, to a proposition which it can neither deny nor comprehend, the effort were well enough. But now they have discovered that such a condition of Deity is not only rational, but necessary; absolutely essential to eternal existence and the work of creation; and, if their premises be correct, the most simple and obvious thing imaginable. The argument is presented by a recent author as follows: It first assumes, that any being, even the Self-existent, could not be conscious of its own existence, without the cognizance of some object extraneous to itself; and if not capable of self-consciousness, much less of creation, or any other act of Deity. Hence the necessity of the eternal existence of a second person, — of a contemplator and a contemplated, the Father and the Son. It next assumes, as a primary truth or an unquestionable premise, that the necessary two could not exist in harmony, in unity, without the intervention of a third as the medium of union; and this brings us to the idea of a Trinity, absolutely, and in the nature of things, necessary. For this last point, — this doctrine of a spiritual mordant, — the intervention of a third substance, in order to effect a union, — what is this but metaphysical chemistry? And, if chemistry is pre-eminently an empirical science, who has experimented thus far? And did he conjure, or how confine spirits in his crucible? What were the tests? and where, pray show us, the laboratory of this modern alchemist? And yet, grave doctors of theology gravely announce such dogmas for the edification of those who count it wisdom to wonder at the lofty strides which reason is taught to practise. But to return to the former part of this argument, — that self-consciousness is not possible without an apprehension of something besides self. Grant the truth of this premise, and how do we know it? Who shall demonstrate it? Or how was it discovered? But *is* the premise true? If it be, we have only to say, it is hugely at odds with common experience; nor will it, without further light, appear to all to consist with the higher efforts of reason and

metaphysical analysis. It is certainly at variance with the first principles of the Cartesian philosophy. For that, in running down the celebrated anti-climax, — the *dubito, cogito, sum*, — arrives at a conviction of the *Me*, without even a suspicion of the *Not Me*; it discovers and surveys the whole region of self-consciousness, in entire ignorance if that be not the universe. Nay, it next seriously doubts whether it be possible "by means of thought," that is, as we understand, by any process of abstract reasoning, to overstep this boundary, — to proceed from the inner to the outer, to advance from a consciousness of self to the knowledge of a second reality. What is this but a house divided against itself? And let it fall. — PROFESSOR H. M. JOHNSON, *in Methodist Quarterly Review for January*, 1853; fourth series, vol. v. pp. 32–3.

In his Introductory Essay to Coleridge's Works (vol. i. pp. 42–3), Professor SHEDD, while contending for what he calls "the position of the Christian theology, that, irrespective of His manifestation in the universe, antecedent to the creation, and in the solitude of his own eternity, God is personally self-conscious, and therefore Triune," and for the *rationality* of the doctrine of the Trinity, which, he says, "contains the only adequate and final answer to the standing objection of Pantheism, viz., that an Infinite Being cannot be personal, because all personal self-consciousness implies limitation," confesses at the same time that "such abstruse and recondite speculation," namely, as to the necessity of a Trinity in the divine nature, "is very apt to run into" "the pantheistic conception of the Deity" which it is intended to destroy.

If this be one of the results of investigations so daring and so irreverent, — and the professor himself refers as an example to "the Trinity of Hegel," — it is not surprising that "for the last two centuries," as he says (p. 41), "it has been customary among English and American theologians to receive the doctrine of the Trinity purely on the ground of its being revealed in Scripture" (or, which would be more correct, on the ground of its being deducible by reason from a combination of the elements of various texts); and that "attempts to establish its rationality have, in the main, been deprecated."

See the section on the irrationality of the dogma of a Triune God, p. 317.

In the last chapter, it was acknowledged by many divines belonging to orthodox churches, that a Trinity in Unity, or a Unity in Trinity, is not a doctrine of express revelation; and here it is admitted, that the same doctrine receives no countenance whatever from the light of reason and of nature. It will now be shown, from similar authorities, that the unity and self-existence of God constitute a fundamental principle of both natural and revealed religion.

SECT. II. — THE UNITY OF GOD A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF BOTH NATURAL AND REVEALED RELIGION.

There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit; invisible; without body, parts, or passions; immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, &c. — WESTMINSTER DIVINES.

§ 1. IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE DIVINE UNITY.

When we come to compare events, and to take them all into our minds at once; when we observe that there is an unity of design in them all, considered collectively, — we ascribe them all ultimately to one great Intelligence, and consider him a person. . . . . There is one thing never to be forgotten for a moment; that is, the unity of God. Scripture and reason jointly proclaim there is but one God: however the proofs of the Divinity of the Son and Holy Ghost may seem to interfere with this, nothing is to be allowed them but what is consistent with it. The divine nature, or substance, can therefore be but "one substance;" the divine power can be but "one power." — DR. JOHN HEY: *Lectures in Divinity*, vol. i. p. 8; ii. pp. 250–1.

The denial of that doctrine [the unity of God] would be an error of still more alarming magnitude than the denial of the distinction of persons in the Godhead. . . . . There may be some diversity of opinion respecting the degree of certainty with which the doctrine may be learned by the light of nature; but in the doctrine itself, that GOD IS ONE, as a doctrine fully certified by revelation, and according with every principle of enlightened reason, there is perfect agreement. — DR. RALPH WARDLAW: *Unitarianism Incapable of Vindication*, pp. 99, 301.

If he [Dr. Drummond] had taken the trouble to examine authentic documents of churches that believe that there are three persons in the Godhead, or the writings of persons who are held in any esteem by us, he would have found that the unity of God is always insisted upon as the very foundation of all religion. — JAMES CARLILE: *Jesus Christ the Great God our Saviour*, p. 28.

Among all the different explanations [of the doctrine of the Trinity] which I have found, I have not met with any one which denied, or at least was designed to deny, the UNITY OF GOD. All admit this to be a fundamental principle; all acknowledge that it is designated in cha-

racters of light both in the Jewish and Christian revelations, and that to deny it would be the grossest absurdity as well as impiety. — MOSES STUART: *Letters to Channing; in Miscellanies*, p. 15.

In support of his assertion that all Christians admit the unity of God, Professor STUART cites passages from creeds of different denominations, all of which expressly mention it as a primary object of belief. The fact can not be denied, and we rejoice in the universality of the acknowledgment; regarding this as a perpetual and a decisive testimony to the truth of the doctrine, and as proving it to be so consonant to the highest reason, and so clearly revealed in the Holy Scriptures, as to forbid the possibility that any one, professing the Christian name, should, consciously and openly, affirm the existence of more Gods than one. But it is a fact equally undeniable, that orthodox writers usually speak of "the three persons in the Godhead" in language which involves the conception of three distinct and separate Minds or Beings, each of them as infinite, or, with a single exception, — that of self-existence, — as equal in all divine perfections; and therefore implies a belief in three Gods, united by the harmony, and not by the identity, of their wills, plans, and operations. Unless, indeed, Trinitarianism belies her own professions by frittering away the three persons, as she sometimes does, into three relations or nominal distinctions of the Absolute One, she must, from the very nature of her doctrine, speak of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost as three equal or unequal Divinities; three Supreme Beings, or only one Supreme and two inferior Gods.

We do not charge any of our orthodox brethren with impiety, or with a clear and distinct consciousness of belief in an unqualified Tritheism; for there is not one of them who would expressly assert the existence of three Gods. But that we have done no injustice to the mode in which the doctrine of the Trinity is commonly understood and explained, is evident from the extracts made in pp. 280–8 and 289–91, to which might have been added a host of others; and from the complaints uttered on this subject by Trinitarians themselves, — as by SOUTH, COLERIDGE, STUART, BUSHNELL, &c.: see pp. 284–9, 292–5.

We take, as a first point, to be held immovably, the strict personal unity of God, — one mind, will, consciousness. . . . . If our feeling is, at any time, confused by these persons or impersonations, we are to have it for a fixed, first truth, that God is, in the most perfect and rigid sense, one Being, — a pure intelligence, undivided, indivisible, and infinite; and that whatever may be true of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it certainly is not true that they are three distinct consciousnesses, wills, and understandings. — DR. HORACE BUSHNELL: *God in Christ*, pp. 136, 176–7.

The first portion of this extract we think perfectly sustained both by reason and revelation; but, in reference to the latter, we do not hesitate to

say, in opposition to the eloquent and highly gifted writer, that, if the Bible be interpreted as any other book which is designed for the comprehension of men, — that is, interpreted in conformity with the universal usage of language, — no doctrine can be found to pervade the Scriptures more plainly than this: that the Father and the Son, the Sender and the Sent, the Lord and his Christ, the Almighty One prayed to and the dependent devout Petitioner, were and are distinct, separate intelligences, having each his own consciousness, will, and understanding, though morally united, — harmonious in affection, plan, and purpose; and it is because they are thus characterized in the New Testament, because they are clearly spoken of as distinct persons, agents, or beings, that we deem it inimical to the truth of revelation to represent these two as one and the same God. Dr. BUSHNELL, however, seems to us to be perfectly justified in intimating, that, as it is a first truth that God is, in the most rigid sense, one Being, it cannot be true that three distinct persons or intelligences, having separate consciousnesses and wills, — in other words, three beings, — are only one God.

The first and most prominent thought, connected with the great word "God," is, that he possesses existence which is underived and eternal. This is what natural and revealed religion mean by God. The idea of an eternal, independent Being is the most exalted conception the human mind can receive of the all-perfect Deity. He is one who exists prior to every other being, and derives his existence from no other. He is self-existent, and has the principle of life in himself. — DR. GARDINER SPRING: *The Glory of Christ*, vol. i. page 39.

Dr. SPRING'S sentiments will, we suppose, recommend themselves to the mind of every intelligent man; and yet they will be found perfectly incompatible with the orthodox dogma of three co-equal persons in one God. If, as the creeds assert, and as probably most Trinitarians believe, the Son and the Holy Ghost derived their existence and their attributes from the Father, — no matter in what way this derivation may be conceived and expressed, whether by the notion of Sonship or Spiration, of being begotten or having proceeded, in time or from eternity, by the will of the Father or by the contemplation of his own perfections, — the conclusion will irresistibly follow, that the two dependent persons are not, and cannot be, each God in the highest, the absolute, sense of the term, — cannot either be equal to Him, the self-existent Father, from whom they had their origin, or be one and the very same Being as that underived Cause of all things. If, according to another view of the Trinitarian mystery, the three divine persons — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — are each a self-existent Being, and therefore each God in the most exalted sense of the word, they must, to all intents and purposes, be three Supreme and Infinite Gods; which is an absurdity, and inconsistent alike with the dictates of reason, and with the whole tenor of the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian revelations.

§ 2. The Unity of God proved by Reason, and manifested in the Works of Creation.

An evident and most natural consequence of this universal and necessary idea of a God, is his unity. All that mention the term "God" intend to convey by it the idea of the first, most exalted, necessarily existent, and infinitely perfect Being; and it is plain there can be but one Being endued with all these perfections. — Archbishop Leighton: *Theological Lectures*, Lect. 7; *in Works*, p. 571.

God is a being absolutely perfect, unmade, or self-originated, and necessarily existing.... It evidently appears that there can be but one such Being, and that unity, oneliness, or singularity, is essential to it; forasmuch as there cannot possibly be more than one supreme, more than one omnipotent, or infinitely powerful Being, and more than one Cause of all things besides itself. — Dr. R. Cudworth: *Intellectual System of the Universe*, vol. i. p. 282.

It hath been alleged by divines and philosophers, with great judgment, that indeed the existence of *a* God is manifested to mankind in the high wisdom and the admirable contrivance that is seen in the whole and parts of the world.... There are a thousand significations, in the works of creation, that God is; but not the least intimation by them, or any other ways, that there are more Gods than one. Seeing, therefore, the works of God were made to display his perfections to the rational part of the creation, we rightly infer, that, because those works discover to us only this, that there is a God, we ought to believe no farther than is declared to us, namely, that *a* God, or one God, there certainly is.... Of one such Mind or Spirit, the works of creation, so full of beauty, order, and design, are a clear demonstration; but they show us not the least footsteps or track of more such spirits and minds. — Dr. Robert South: *The Judgment of a Disinterested Person*, pp. 50–1.

The unity of the Godhead is a truth enstamped on the very nature of man, and may be as plainly proved from the light of nature as that there is a God. There can be no more than one Being who is without beginning, and who gave being to all other things: which appears from the very nature of the thing; for if there are more Gods, then they must derive their being from him, and then they are a part of his creation, and consequently not Gods, for God and the creature are infinitely opposed to each other; and since there is but one independent Being, who is in and of himself, and derives his perfections

from no other, therefore there can be but one God. . . Infinite perfection being implied in the idea of a God, it is certain that it cannot belong to more than one; for, as it implies that this perfection is boundless, so it denotes that he sets bounds to the perfections of all others: therefore, if there are more Gods than one, their perfections must be limited, and consequently that which is not infinite is not God. And as infinite perfection implies in it all perfection, so it cannot be divided among many; for then no being, that has only a part thereof, could be said to be thus perfect: therefore, since there is but one that is so, it follows that there is no other God besides him. . . There is but one Being who is, as God is often said to be, the best and the greatest: therefore, if there were more Gods than one, either one must be supposed to be more excellent than another, or both equally excellent. If we suppose the former of these, then he who is not the most excellent is not God; and if the latter, that their excellences are equal, then infinite perfection would be divided; which is contrary to the idea thereof, as well as to what is expressly said by God, "To whom will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One," Isa. xl. 25. — Abridged from DR. THOMAS RIDGLEY: *Body of Divinity*, vol. i. pp. 194–6.

If there were any other self-existent Being besides that whose existence we have demonstrated, he must in all respects be equal to him; for otherwise it would be natural to suppose some derivation or dependency, inconsistent with self-existence, and consequently with the hypothesis. To suppose such another Being is to limit the omnipotence of God; for . . . it seems he would be unable to act without his consent, at least tacitly implied; and, if their volitions should in any respect contradict each other, which in things indifferent they might at least very possibly do, the one would be a restraint upon the other, and so neither would be omnipotent. . . . The unity of design, which seems to prevail in the works of nature, makes it reasonable to believe it had but one author, and that he operated in an uncontrolled manner. There is no reason from the light of nature to conclude that there are any more Deities than one, or indeed to imagine there are any more; since one almighty and all-wise Being can do as much as a thousand such beings can do. — DR. PHILIP DODDRIDGE: *Course of Lectures*, part ii. prop. xxxix., or vol. i. pp. 132–3.

As authorities for these sentiments, the lecturer or his editors refer to WILKINS, Bishop BURNET, LE CLERC, JOHN HOWE and GROTIUS, as well as to several eminent Unitarians.

So far as I know, all who have acknowledged one infinite God have regarded the acknowledgment of more as an absurdity. In this sentiment have concurred the Patriarchs, Jews, Christians, Mohammedans, and all those modern infidels who have not denied the existence of such a God. These classes of men have, with one voice, renounced the idea of more than one such God. Such a general accordance, in men differing in other respects so widely, clearly indicates that the admission of one infinite God brings with it, to the human mind, serious difficulties against the admission of more; and plainly implies that more cannot be admitted by the mind, without violence done to the understanding. . . . Although the proofs of the existence of God are complete, yet there is no proof of the existence of more than one God. The argument for the being of God, which I mentioned as exhibited in the happiest manner by Mr. Locke, proves unanswerably the being of one eternal, self-existent Cause, possessed of sufficient intelligence to contrive, and sufficient power to create, the universe of worlds, and all which it contains. The existence of one such Cause completely removes from the mind every difficulty, and satisfactorily accounts for every thing. . . . . The unity of design and agency in creation and providence furnishes another argument in proof of the existence of but one God. So far as we are able to understand the works of creation and providence, we discern a general simplicity and harmony in the nature and operations of all things. Amid the immense complication which surrounds us, we perceive one set of laws, in accordance with which all things proceed in their course. The same causes produce uniformly the same effects in every place and period. Vegetables spring from the same seed, germinate by the same means, assume the same form, sustain the same qualities, exist through the same duration, and come to the same end. Animals also are born in one manner, and exhibit the same life, powers, and tendencies. Man has one origin, form, life, system of faculties, character, and termination. All things in this world are, in one regular manner, made subservient to his use and happiness; and are plainly fitted by one design, and conducted by one agency, to this end. Day and night uniformly return by a single power, and with exact regularity. With the same regularity and simplicity, the seasons pursue their circuit. The sun shines, illuminates, warms, and moves the planets by a single law, and with exact uniformity. By one law, the planets keep their orbits and perform their revolutions. The face of the heavens is but one, and the oldest sphere which is known presents to our view the

same constellations which we now behold in the nightly firmament. Thus all things, so far as our knowledge extends, present to our view a single design, regularly executed by a single agency. But unity of design is a proof of one designer; and unity of agency, of one agent. — DR. TIMOTHY DWIGHT: *Sermon* 4; *in Theology Explained*, vol. i. pp. 115–16, 119.

To prove the unity of this great Being, in opposition to a plurality of Gods, it is not necessary to have recourse to metaphysical abstractions. It is sufficient to observe, that the notion of more than one Author of nature is inconsistent with that harmony of design which pervades her works; that it explains no appearances, is supported by no evidence, and serves no purpose but to embarrass and perplex our conceptions. . . . . There is but one such Being. To affirm there is more than one, without reason, must, by the very terms, be unreasonable. But no shadow of reason can be assigned for believing in a plurality of such beings; because the supposition of one accounts for all that we see, as well, and even much better than the supposition of more. That there must be one underived, self-existent, eternal, and intelligent Cause, must of necessity be allowed, in order to account for what we know to exist; but no reason can be assigned for supposing more. It is with the utmost propriety established as an axiom, that we ought in no case to assign more causes than will account for the effects. — ROBERT HALL: *Modern Infidelity considered*, and *Notes of Sermons; in Works*, vol. i. p. 26; iii. pp. 14, 15.

It has been urged that unity of plan [in the laws of physical action] might result from the co-operation of several minds, powers, or agencies. But to suppose many causes, when one will suffice, is clearly unphilosophical; and, besides this, the objection, however plausible when stated merely in an abstract form, will vanish the moment we reflect on the actual case of the material creation. When we consider . . . the immense multiplicity of physical arrangements, all so admirably harmonizing together; the infinite combination of adjustments, each arranged in exact relation to the other, as well as complete within itself, — we cannot but feel overwhelmed with the conviction, that to One Omniscient Mind alone can be correctly attributed such infinite forethought, and such boundless comprehensiveness of arrangement. — BADEN POWELL: *The Connection of Natural and Divine Truth*, pp. 188–9.

STUART (in Miscellanies, p. 42) well remarks, that the proposition, "God is one" means "that there is in him only one intelligent agent."

§ 8. THE UNITY OF GOD REVEALED IN THE SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

"Unto thee it was showed," ... "that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God: there is none else beside him," Deut. iv. 35. And, as the law, so the gospel teacheth us the same: "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one," 1 Cor. viii. 4. This unity of the Godhead will easily appear as necessary as the existence; so that it must be as impossible there should be more Gods than one, as that there should be none.... The nature of God consists in this, that he is the prime and original cause of all things, as an independent Being upon which all things else depend, and likewise the ultimate end or final cause of all: but in this sense two prime causes are unimaginable; and for all things to depend of one, and to be more independent Beings than one, is a clear contradiction. This primity God requires to be attributed to himself: "Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel my called! I am he; I am the first, I also am the last," Isa. xlviii. 12. And from this primity he challengeth his unity: "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts, I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God," Isa. xliv. 6.... If there were more Gods than one, then were not all perfections in one.... "He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth" (Dan. iv. 35), said Nebuchadnezzar out of his experience; and St. Paul expresseth him as "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." If, then, there were more supreme Governors of the world than one, each of them absolute and free, they might have contrary determinations concerning the same thing; than which nothing can be more prejudicial unto government. God is a God of order, not confusion; and therefore of unity, not admitting multiplication. If it be better that the universe should be governed by one than many, we may be assured that it is so; because nothing must be conceived of God but what is best.... Now, God is not only one, but hath a unity peculiar to himself, by which he is the *only* God; and that not only by way of actuality, but also of possibility. Every individual man is one, but so as there is a second and a third; and consequently every one is part of a number, and concurring to a multitude;... whereas in the divine nature there is an intrinsical and essential singularity, because no other being can have any existence but from that; and whatsoever essence hath its existence from another is

not God. "I am the Lord," saith he, "and there is none else; there is no God besides me: that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me. I am the Lord, and there is none else," Isa. xlv. 5, 6. Deut. iv. 35, and xxxii. 39. Ps. xviii. 31. He who hath infinite knowledge knoweth no other God beside himself. "Is there a God besides me? yea, there is no God; I know not any," Isa. xlv. 18, 21, 22, and xliv. 8. And we who believe in him, and desire to enjoy him, need for that end to know no other God but him. "For this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God" (John xvii. 3), — as certainly *one* as *God*. . . . If we should apprehend more Gods than one, I know not what could determine us, in any instant, to the actual adoration of any one; for where no difference doth appear (as, if there were many, and all by nature Gods, there could be none), what inclination could we have, what reason could we imagine, to prefer or elect any one before the rest for the object of our devotions? . . . Without this acknowledgment [of the unity of God], we cannot give unto God the things which are God's; it being part of the worship and honor due unto God to accept of no compartner with him. When the law was given, in the observance whereof the religion of the Israelites consisted, the first precept was this prohibition, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me" (Exod. xx. 3); and whosoever violateth this, denieth the foundation on which all the rest depend. . . This is the true reason of that strict precept by which all are commanded to give divine worship to God only: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matt. iv. 10. . . . Upon this foundation the whole heart of man is entirely required of him, and engaged to him: "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one God: therefore thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might," Deut. vi. 4, 5. . . . If there were more Gods than one, our love must necessarily be terminated unto more than one, and consequently divided between them. — BISHOP PEARSON: *Exposition of the Creed*, Art. I. pp. 32–5.

There is one God, that is, but one; as St. Paul elsewhere expresseth it, "There is none other God but one," 1 Cor. viii. 4. And Moses lays this as the foundation of the natural law, as well as of the Jewish religion, "The Lord he is one God, and there is none besides him" (Deut. iv. 35); that is, besides Jehovah, whom the people of Israel did worship as the only true God. And this the prophet Isaiah perpetually declares, in opposition to the polytheism and variety of gods among

the heathen, "I am the first and I am the last; and besides me there is no God," Isa. xliv. 6. And again, ver. 8, "Is there any God besides me? There is no God; I know not any:" He who hath an infinite knowledge, and knows all things, knows no other God. And our blessed Saviour makes this the fundamental article of all religion, and the knowledge of it necessary to every man's salvation. "This," says he, "is life eternal, to know thee the only true God." — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermon* 48; *in Works*, vol. iii. pp. 279–80.

The unity of the Godhead is a truth not barely founded on a few places of Scripture that expressly assert it, but it may be deduced from every part thereof. — DR. THOMAS RIDGLEY: *Body of Divinity*, vol. i. p. 194.

That there is one Supreme God, the Scriptures uniformly teach.... No one at all familiar with the books of the Old Testament can be ignorant, that Moses and the other prophets proposed it as the end of all their ministrations to impress indelibly upon the hearts and understandings of the Jews a proper conception of the one true God, Jehovah; and that the same essential truth, which lay at the foundation of the Jewish faith, was fully sanctioned and confirmed by Christ and his apostles, is evident as well from their acknowledging, in general terms, the divine legation of the ancient prophets, as from their more explicit declarations on this very point in various parts of the New Testament. — J. F. FLATT: *Dissertation on the Deity of Christ; in Biblical Repertory*, new series, vol. i. pp. 35–6.

The doctrine of the unity of God is taught in the most clear and explicit manner in the Old and New Testaments. "Jehovah is God, Jehovah is ONE," *i.e.* one God, Deut. vi. 4; iv. 35, 39; xxxii. 39. "I am God, and there is none else," Isa. xlv. 5, 21, 22; Ps. lxxxvi. 10. The doctrine of the unity of God was at the foundation of the whole Mosaic religion and institute, and also of the Christian religion. "And this is eternal life, that they might know thee," τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεὸν ["the only true God"], John xvii. 3. Ἡμῖν εἷς θεὸς ὁ πατήρ, "We believe in *one* God," 1 Cor. viii. 4–6; James ii. 19, *seq.* — DR. G. C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. xvi. I.

The theology of Judaism was pure, sublime, and devotional. The belief of one supreme, self-existent, and all-perfect Being, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, was the basis of all the religious institutions of the Israelities; the sole object of their hopes, fears, and worship.... It was the avowed design of that law [the law of Moses] to teach the Israelites that there is only one God, and to secure them

from that polytheism and idolatry which prevailed among all the nations round about them. . . . . Jesus Christ and his apostles . . . retain all that is excellent in the Old-Testament revelation; for Christ came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them, and to carry the scheme of religion there laid down to a still higher degree of excellency. — T. HARTWELL HORNE: *Introduction to the Critical Study of the Holy Scriptures*, vol. i. pp. 143, 149.

If we follow the guidance of Scripture, we are to conceive of God as one; one Being or existence; one Mind, creating, directing, controlling, all things; possessing the faculties and attributes essential to all mental or spiritual existence, as consciousness, understanding, will, affections, &c. — JOSEPH HAVEN, Jun., *in New Englander for Feb.* 1850; vol. viii. (new series, vol. ii.) p. 17.

In the Old Testament, God is distinctly announced as the one living and true God. . . . The unity of God is made especially prominent, and contrasted strongly and variously with the idolatrous notions prevalent among men. It is a pure system of Theism, allowing not the slightest departure from the strict idea of one God only, supreme on earth and in heaven, and alone entitled to the homage and adoration of men. God is distinctly an individual, not an abstract power. — DR. SETH SWEETSER, *in Bibliotheca Sacra for January*, 1854; vol. xi. p. 88.

These extracts are given, not as implying that any Trinitarian professedly believes in a plurality of Gods, but as pointing out the immense weight of evidence in favor of the Divine Unity over that for a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, — evidence so strong and irresistible that scarcely any Christian can deny the existence of only one underived, self-existent, and eternal Cause. It is, however, for the believer in the perfect equality of three divine persons seriously to consider, whether this doctrine does not infringe on the unity of God; and for him who advocates the derivation of the Son and Holy Spirit from the Father to reflect, whether this notion is not entirely incompatible with that of eternity and self-existence, which are acknowledged attributes of Deity. To adopt the language of MOSES STUART (in Biblical Repository for July, 1835, vol. vi. p. 113), we would ask, "To what good purpose can it be that Christians strenuously assert their belief in the unity of God, while they continue to make representations which, when strictly examined, prove to be altogether inconsistent, in a theoretical point of view, with numerical unity of substance and essential attributes? I am filled with unwelcome apprehension, whenever I perceive that a far greater proportion of zeal is maintained, in any metaphysical school of theology, for the personality than for the unity of the Godhead, — just as though 'Hear, O Israel! Jehovah our God is ONE JEHOVAH,' were expunged from the Sacred Record, or put in the background! This should not be so."

SECT. III. — GOD, THE FATHER, THE ONLY PERSON OR BEING WHO IS UNDERIVED OR SELF-EXISTENT AND SUPREME.

How immeasurably exalted must the Father be above the Son and Spirit, if he is the ground or cause of their being, the *fons et principium* of Godhead itself! — MOSES STUART.

By the gift of eternal generation, Christ hath received of the Father one and in number the self-same substance, which the Father hath of himself unreceived from any other. For every beginning is a Father unto that which cometh of it, and every offspring is a Son unto that out of which it groweth. Seeing, therefore, the Father alone is originally that Deity which Christ originally is not (for Christ is God by being of God, Light by issuing out of Light), it followeth hereupon, that whatsoever Christ hath common unto him with his heavenly Father, the same of necessity must be given him, but naturally and eternally given. — RICHARD HOOKER: *Ecclesiastical Polity*, book v. chap. liv. 2; *in Works*, vol. i. pp. 395–6.

According to the second section of the present chapter (pp. 381–91), nature and revelation proclaim the existence of only one God, — of only one Being who is self-originated, absolutely perfect, and unequalled by any other intelligence in heaven or on earth. Here it is admitted by HOOKER, — though in terms and with notions which are taken from the creed of a metaphysical age, but which, to do justice to the main idea, may be put in the simpler language of the New Testament, — that that Being is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This holy Son of God, however divine may have been his nature and however great his powers, is obviously different from and inferior to Him who is the one God, the Parent of his existence, and the Giver of "whatsoever Christ hath." His nature and his powers, not less than those of the humblest and most obscure of the human family, were alike derived from the Infinite Source of life and light.

As I am assured that there is an infinite and independent Being, which we call a God, and that it is impossible there should be more infinities than one; so I assure myself that this one God is the Father of all things, especially of all men and angels, so far as the mere act of creation may be styled generation; that he is, farther yet, and in a more peculiar manner, the Father of all those whom he regenerated by his Spirit, whom he adopteth in his Son, as heirs and coheirs with him. . . . But beyond and far above all this, . . . I believe him the Father, in a more eminent and transcendent manner, of one singular

and proper Son, his own, his beloved, his only-begotten Son; whom he hath not only begotten of the blessed Virgin, by the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the overshadowing of his power; not only sent with special authority as the King of Israel; not only raised from the dead, and made heir of all things in his house; but, antecedently to all this, hath begotten him by way of eternal generation in the same Divinity and Majesty with himself: by which paternity, co-eval to the Deity, I acknowledge him always Father, as much as always God. And, in this relation, I profess that eminency and priority, that as he is the original Cause of all things as created by him, so is he the Fountain of the Son begotten of him, and of the Holy Ghost proceeding from him. — BISHOP PEARSON: *Exposition of the Creed*, Art. I. pp. 58–9.

See another passage from this learned writer, quoted in the present work, p. 265.

If the human mind is capable of entertaining the dogma, that two persons who received their essence, all that they are, and all that they have, from another Being that was prior to them and is pre-eminent over them, are either co-equal and co-eternal in power and glory with their Paternal Benefactor, or are one and the same Being, with the self-same consciousness, as he, — or are both equal to and identical with him, — there seems to be no good reason for supposing, that it may not also entertain any notion, however gross, absurd, or contradictory, which, under the name or the plea of a holy mystery, may be presented for its belief.

Not only the name and title of God, but the most incommunicable properties and perfections of the Deity, are in Scripture frequently ascribed to the Son and the Holy Ghost; one property only excepted, which is peculiar to the Father, as he is the Principle and Fountain of the Deity, — that he is of himself, and of no other; which is not, nor can be, said of the Son and Holy Ghost. — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermon* 44; *in Works*, vol. iii. pp. 215–16.

According to this excellent prelate, the Son and the Holy Ghost are devoid of at least one of the properties or perfections of Deity, — underived existence. The Father, therefore, is alone God; for he only has this perfection; he only is absolutely perfect. To use the words of the same writer, in his forty-eighth Sermon: "Absolute perfection, which we ascribe to God as the most essential notion which mankind hath always had concerning him, does necessarily suppose Unity; because this is essential to the notion of a Being that is absolutely perfect, that all perfection meets and is united in such a Being. But to imagine more Gods, and some perfections to be in one, and some in another, does destroy the most essential notion which men have of God; namely, that he is a Being absolutely perfect, that is, as perfect as possible."

The Father is the first person in the following respects: 1st, In the order of subsistence. The hypostasis is ascribed to the Father. The Son is called "the express image of his person," the character of his hypostasis. The Father, therefore, is the archetype; the Son, the resemblance: but the archetype is prior to that which is conformed to it. . . Whilst [however], &c. . . . . 2dly, In the order of operation. Since the Father works by the Son, it necessarily follows, that, in relation to the other persons, he works originally and from himself, and has in himself the principle of operation, as well personally as essentially. — HERMAN WITSIUS: *Dissertations on the Apostles' Creed*, Diss. vii. 6, 7.

When the Son is called second to the Father, or a minister to the Father, this denotes the subordination of persons, inasmuch as the one derives his origin from the other, but does not imply any inequality of nature in these divine persons. The Father, as the Father, is the first person in the Holy Trinity; the Son, the second after the Father. In all divine operations, the Son is the minister of the Father, inasmuch as he ever operates *from* the Father, who is the Source and Origin of all his divine operations as well as of his being, and God the Father operates *through* him; but the Father is never said to operate from the Son, or the Son through the Father. — BISHOP BULL: *Defensio Fidei Nicenæ*, sect. iv. cap. 2, § 2.

This extract is quoted and approved by W. D. CONYBEARE in his Theological Lectures, pp. 457–8.

Notwithstanding the learned bishop's attempt to evade the consequences resulting from his own sentiments, when he says that the Son's derivation from the Father "does not imply any inequality of nature," we have no hesitation in affirming that no Unitarian could frame language more plainly expressive of the infinite disparity and the unqualified distinction which exist between the Supreme Being, or universal Parent, and his best-beloved Son. The First of all fathers and of all intelligences, here unscripturally called "the first person in the Holy Trinity," is, according to Bishop BULL, and in perfect agreement with the declarations of the New Testament, the "Source and Origin of all the divine operations of the Son, as well as of his being." In proof of this position, we would refer to the numerous texts quoted in the first part of "Scripture Proofs and Scriptural Illustrations of Unitarianism."

God the Father alone is, in reference to his manner of existence, an absolutely perfect Being, because he alone is self-existent. He alone, consequently, is absolutely perfect in reference to those perfections which do presuppose self-existence. Those perfections are

absolute independence, and being the first Original of all other beings; in which the Son and the Holy Ghost are comprehended. . . . It is, therefore, a flat contradiction to say that the second and third persons are self-existent; and therefore it is alike contradictious to affirm them to be beings absolutely perfect in reference to their manner of existence, and to say that they have the perfections of absolute independence, and of being the first Originals of all things. Since the Father alone is a Being of the most absolute perfection, he having those perfections which the other two persons are uncapable of having, the alone is God in the absolutely highest sense. — EDWARD [illegible], Bishop of Gloucester: *Certain Propositions*, pp. 3–5, Lond. 1719.

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These sentiments yield up, in the clearest manner, the great principle for which Unitarians have always contended; but that they were not penned by a Unitarian is evident from the fact, that, in the same small pamphlet, the writer professes to oppose both Arianism and Socinianism, by asserting that the Son and Holy Spirit have *all* the perfections of the Godhead, such as eternal existence and unlimited power, with the exception of those that must of necessity be peculiar to the Father, and "that there is an unconceivably close and inseparable union both in will and nature between them" and the Father. (See pp. 7–10.) A defender of the Nicene fathers, and an admirer, if not a disciple, of CUDWORTH and BULL, he only carries out their principles to a more legitimate extent.

The Father is, as it were, the top of Unity, the Head and Fountain of all. He is first in our conception of God; and therefore, whether we speak of the Almighty God, or the eternal God, or the all-knowing God (and the reason is the same for the only God, unity being an attribute of the Godhead, like omnipotence, eternity, &c.), we primarily and principally mean the Father, tacitly including the other two persons. . . . . It is very certain that the Son has his knowledge, and every other perfection, from the Father, in the same sense as he hath also his nature or substance from the Father. — DR. DANIEL WATERLAND: *Eight Sermons*, pp. 141, 267.

But this writer adds, that the Son's knowledge is one and the same, in extent and degree, with the Father's.

In those verses [of the Athanasian Creed], the Father is asserted to be the Fountain and Origin of Divinity, and of course the Fountain and Origin of all divine power. The Nicene Creed, which corresponds with the creed under consideration, intimates the same, when it styles our Lord "God of, *i. e.* from God, Light of Light, very God of very God." And the most learned writer on this subject [Bishop BULL]

has shown that the primitive Christians before the Council of Nice, as well as after that council, held this doctrine. *Uno ore docuerunt* are his words, "they taught it with one voice," so unanimous were they in this opinion. — BISHOP HUNTINGFORD: *Thoughts on the Trinity; in Theological Works*, p. 90.

The whole doctrine of the Scriptures . . . holds forth to us an establishment of divine wisdom, righteousness, and goodness, for the recovery of lapsed mankind to holiness and happiness. In this constitution, the Almighty Father is the First Cause and the Supreme Object of the whole, sustaining the legislative honors of the divine character: and therefore he is *peculiarly* denominated God, "of whom are all things," in the creation and sustentation of the universe, and in the redemption and salvation of the church, "and we to him," as our highest end; "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ;" also "the one God," "the only God," and "the true God," in opposition to the fictitious deities of the world. On the other hand, the Son of God is the Mediator, Saviour, Redeemer, and Lord, in the actual execution of the eternal and gracious purposes, by his humiliation in assuming our nature, by his exaltation in that nature and in his official capacity, and by the works of his Holy Spirit. Thus the Father is glorified in the Son, the Spirit of Truth glorifies the Lord Jesus, and God is all in all. — DR. J. P. SMITH: *Scripture Testimony*, vol. ii. p. 392.

See LIMBORCH and HOLDEN, as quoted in p. 266; with remarks by CALVIN, LE CLERC, and STUART, on this mode of explaining the Trinity in Unity, pp. 266–8. See also STUART and Dr. D. W. CLARK on eternal generation and procession, pp. 274–6.

With the exception of such Trinitarians as believe in a nominal or relative Trinity of persons in the Godhead, and those who deny the eternal generation of the Son and the procession of the Holy Ghost, — whose opinions, when definitely explained, are, as we before observed, either a kind of obscure Unitarianism, or an unconscious Tritheism, — perhaps a great majority of those who are professedly orthodox on the subject agree with the eminent writers from whom we have made extracts in this section. The sentiments here propounded, however, when separated from the anti-scriptural dogmas with which they are combined, are evidently nothing else than Unitarianism; namely, that God the Father is the only Being who is self-existent or unoriginated and independent; that the Son, and the Holy Spirit (as signifying a person distinct from the Father), received their existence, their capacities, and their powers from Him who is called "the Fountain of Deity;" or, in other words, that Jesus Christ, and every other person or being in the universe, are infinitely subordinate or inferior to the one Supreme God, the Almighty Father.

SECT. IV. — THE ONE SUPREME PERSON OR BEING, THE FATHER, THE ONLY OBJECT OF PRIMARY AND UNCEASING ADORATION.

O God! we praise thee, and confess
That thou the only Lord
And everlasting Father art,
By all the earth adored.

BISHOP PATRICK.

§ 1. THE WORSHIP OF A TRINITY UNSCRIPTURAL AND IMPROPER. — GOD TO BE ADDRESSED AS ONE.

I dislike this vulgar prayer, "Holy Trinity, one God! have mercy on us," as altogether savoring of barbarism. We repudiate such expressions, as being not only insipid, but profane. — Abridged from JOHN CALVIN: *Tractatus Theologici*, p. 796.

In reference to this remark, Dr. SOUTH (in Judgment of a Disinterested Person, p. 29) says: "As to that prayer [in the Liturgy of the Church of England], 'O God the Father! have mercy on us; O God the Son! have mercy on us; O God the Holy Ghost! have mercy on us,' — it hath been disliked by divers learned men, particularly by Mr. CALVIN. But 'tis certain, 'tis not the church's intention to own hereby three spirits, or three objects of worship; the object of worship being incontestably, and I think confessedly, but one. The church, by this form of prayer, means only to invocate God by the three distinctions which she owneth to be in him.... 'Father,' when said of God, is original intellect; 'Son' is reflex wisdom; and 'Holy Spirit' is divine love."

We quote the whole passage, in the Litany, that the reader may compare it with any of the prayers recorded in the Bible as having been presented to God by Jesus Christ and the apostles, especially with that most simple and sublime of all liturgical forms, — the Lord's Prayer. "O God the Father of heaven! have mercy upon us miserable sinners. O God the Son, Redeemer of the world! have mercy upon us miserable sinners. O God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son! have mercy upon us miserable sinners. O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God! have mercy upon us miserable sinners."

Whatever may have been "the church's intention," we think it "incontestable" that no terms could more clearly express belief in the existence of three separate objects of worship, or three Gods, than the prayer to which the Genevan Reformer objects. And SOUTH himself seems to have felt that his Sabellian "distinctions" could not be appreciated by the great mass of the worshippers in the English church; for he immediately adds, 'Notwithstanding, because of the common people, who by occasion of that

form may entertain Tritheistic notions, Mr. CALVIN advised well, that this and such like offensive forms be taken away. When I say 'offensive,' I mean they are forms at which the ignorant may dangerously stumble, — may easily make shipwreck of the faith."

We Christians are taught by the Christian religion to acknowledge and worship the only true God: "and we are in Him that is true, in or by his Son Jesus Christ;" that is, we worship the only true God, by his Son Jesus Christ. . . . . The religion of the apostles and primitive Christians . . . expressly teacheth us, that there is but one object of our prayers, and one Mediator by whom we are to make our addresses to God. "There is one God; and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," says St. Paul, when he gives a standing rule concerning prayer in the Christian church. — ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermons* 71, 191; *in Works*, vol. v. p. 189, and vol. x. p. 144.

Whatever distinction we are taught to make of the persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, we are most carefully warned [by the compilers of our Liturgy] against the division of the Godhead; and all our devotions are addressed to one and the same God, through the mediation of Christ Jesus, agreeably to the whole tenor of Scripture, and particularly to the doctrine laid down in the plainest terms in my text [1 Tim. ii. 5], that "there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." — DR. BENJAMIN DAWSON: *Illustration of Texts of Scripture*, pp. 206–7.

No one will assert that God is ever directly addressed in the Bible as a Trinity of co-eternal or self-existent hypostases, or even of unequal but essentially divine agents; but rather invariably as one single Person or Being, the Creator of heaven and earth, the God of the Jews, the Father of Jesus Christ, the Parent of all intelligent beings. Yet, unhappily, the practice of Christian churches has, in general, differed from that of prophets and apostles; and Dr. DAWSON'S statement would have been nearer the truth of the case, had he said that all the devotions of the English church *should*, "agreeably to the whole tenor of Scripture," be addressed to one and the same God.

The general practice of Scripture seems to indicate, that, in ordinary worship, we should address the Deity in his unity, manifested to us as, in Christ Jesus, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing to men their trespasses. I confess that I have ever disliked the use of the word "Trinity" in prayer to God, as not being a name whereby God reveals himself to us, and as savoring of scholastic theology. — JAMES CARLILE: *Jesus Christ the Great God our Saviour*, p. 232.

§ 2. THE FATHER ENTITLED TO SUPREME WORSHIP.

Then do we honor the Trinity in Unity, not when we conceive of the mystery, but when we make a religious use of this high advantage to come to God in the name of Christ by the Spirit, and look for all from God in Christ through the Holy Ghost. Direct your prayers to God the Father. Christ prayed to the Father: "I thank thee, O Father! Lord of heaven and earth." So the saints in their addresses: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Pray in the name of Christ: "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." Pray by the Spirit: "Praying in the Holy Ghost;" "Likewise the Spirit itself also helpeth our infirmities, because he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God." Christians need not puzzle themselves about conceiving of Three in One, and One in Three: let them in this manner come to God, and it sufficeth; make God the object, and Christ the means of access, and look for help from the Spirit. — DR. THOMAS MANTON; *apud Christian Reformer for June*, 1839.

When we speak of or contemplate the divine nature absolutely, and without reference to particular dispensations, God the Father is generally the first in our conceptions, as far as he can be the object of conception, but not to the exclusion of the divine nature either of the Son or Holy Ghost. In these dispensations, in the heavenly economy, we have a manifest and obvious reason for addressing our prayers and petitions, public and private, for the most part, to the first person of the Holy Trinity. — WILLIAM HAWKINS: *Discourses on Scripture Mysteries*, pp. 29, 30.

It appears from what has been said, that we ought to regard and acknowledge the Father as the Head of the Sacred Trinity, and the primary object of religious homage. . . . We often read of Christ's praying unto the Father, but never read of the Father's praying unto Christ. He taught his disciples to pray in the same form in which he prayed, and to say, "Our Father which art in heaven;" and to ask the Father, in his name, for every thing they wanted. And how often did the apostles offer up their devout and fervent prayers for others to "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"! This common mode of expression, in their addresses to the throne of grace, plainly implies that they meant to acknowledge the Father as the primary or supreme object of adoration. Though the heavenly hosts pay divine homage to the Son of God, yet they more immediately and

directly address the Father in their most solemn and grateful devotions. They say, "Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." These examples of Christ, of the apostles, and of the heavenly hosts, not only warrant but require Christians to address their prayers and praises to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the primary object of divine homage and adoration. — DR. NATHANAEL EMMONS: *Works*, vol. iv. pp. 137–8.

In the same pages from which this extract is taken, Dr. EMMONS inconsistently speaks of "all the three persons in the Godhead" as "*equal* in every divine perfection;" and approves the conduct of "the great body of the most pure and pious Christians" who have "denied Christian communion and fellowship to those who have openly embraced the Unitarian error;" that is, as we understand it, to those who, like himself, regard the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as "the primary or supreme object of adoration."

The revealed order in the economy of redemption and grace, and the authority of Scripture, lead to the persuasion, that the most usual mode of our devotional addresses should be to the Father, with explicit reference to the mediation of the Son and the influence of the Holy Spirit. — DR. J. PYE SMITH: *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. ii. p. 455.

In the Scriptures . . . we are directed and encouraged to address ourselves to him [God] as our heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, the Son of his love; and in his name to offer up our prayers and praises, our confessions and thanksgivings, with the profoundest humility, becoming creatures deeply sensible of their own unworthiness. — THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE: *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, vol. i. p. 149.

§ 3. THE SON RARELY, THE HOLY GHOST (AS A PERSON DIFFERENT FROM THE FATHER) NEVER, IN THE BIBLE, ADDRESSED IN PRAYER.

All prayer is regularly directed to the Father, and concluded in the name of the Son. . . . But all prayer is addressed to the Father or to the Son, and never to the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is a gift; and a gift is not to be asked from the gift, but rather bestowed by the liberal giver. — WILLIAM DURAND; *apud Sandium*, p. 213.

Nearly in the same words, HUGH DE ST. CHER, who says that "prayer should be offered up rarely to the Son."

That the Holy Ghost is God is nowhere said in Scripture; that the Holy Ghost is to be invocated is nowhere commanded, nor any example of its being done recorded. — JEREMY TAYLOR: *Works*, vol. xiii. pp. 143–4.

When you make your prayers, you use to pray to the Father, and likewise in the name of Christ; but you do not at all or seldom read, in all the Scriptures, of prayers made to the Holy Ghost? And why? Because it is his office to make the prayers themselves, which you thus put up to the other two persons; and therein lieth his honor. — DR. THOMAS GOODWIN: *Exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians*, part i. p. 16.

It is true we have no precept or example for paying distinct and direct homage to the Holy Ghost; but, &c. — DR. NATHANAEL EMMONS: *Works*, vol. iv. p. 138.

The words [in 1 Thess. iii. 11] are certainly decisive for the opinion, that prayers to the Son are not inadmissible, even if they refer to external relations; but the very circumstance that such occur no more in the New Testament, and then the whole analogy of faith, are, surely, decidedly opposed to making prayers to the Saviour frequently, much more predominantly and almost exclusively, in all external circumstances, as is done in the community of Moravian brothers. The entire ancient church knows of no prayers to Christ which have reference to externals. If, therefore, beginners in the life of faith often confess themselves to be uncertain whether they shall address their prayers to the Father or to the Son, or even to the Holy Ghost perhaps, it is to be assumed as a general rule, according to the rightly understood relation of the Trinity, that external relations must be brought before the Father in prayer, but the religious moral relations before the Son and the Holy Ghost, or, in fine, that one should pray for every thing *of* the Father, *through* the Son, *in* the Holy Ghost. — HERMANN OLSHAUSEN on 1 Thess. iii. 11.

The distinction, here spoken of, between relations which are external and those of a religious and moral kind, as a ground for addressing different persons in the Godhead, was entirely unknown to Jesus Christ and the apostles. The great Master taught his disciples, in all that related to prayer, or divine worship, to address no other person or being than Him who was the sole object of his own praises and petitions; and, except in a few cases of a peculiar character, the apostles faithfully obeyed his strict and unqualified behest.

A list of the texts showing the propriety of our restricting supreme adoration to the greatest of all beings, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ, will be found in "Scripture Proofs and Scriptural Illustrations of Unitarianism," part i. chap. 1, sect. 11. The few passages which seem to favor occasional prayers to our Lord will be noticed in future volumes of the present work.

OLSHAUSEN's concluding recommendation, that "one should pray for *every thing* of THE FATHER," &c., accords with the following verse in an ancient hymn, —

"To thee, great God, we bend the knee,
And in the Holy Ghost,
Through Christ, all glory give to thee,
With all the heavenly host;" —

and, if its simple grandeur be not alloyed by the introduction of modern elements of thought, is more scriptural than the generality of the doxologies pronounced and sung in Trinitarian churches. Compare Dr. MANTON's remarks, quoted in p. 399.

§ 4. THE FATHER, ALMOST TO THE ENTIRE EXCLUSION OF THE SON AND HOLY GHOST, WORSHIPPED BY THE TRINITARIAN CONGREGATIONALISTS, OR INDEPENDENTS, OF ENGLAND.

Does the direct worship of the Lord Christ occupy so prominent a place in our prayers, public and private, as, considering the character of the dispensation, and Scripture warrant, it ought and might? and, if not, does not this subtract an element of holy inspiration from our social services, which might go to inform, animate, and warm our fellow-worshippers and ourselves? . . . It is feared that such a charge [namely, of seeming to war against the glory of the Mediator] derives countenance from the almost universal practice of addressing the Father alone in prayer, although nothing could be further from the writer's thoughts than to insinuate that this springs in any measure from want of devotion to the Son. . . . Has any mischief ensued from the practice of exclusively, or almost exclusively, addressing the Father in prayer? Decidedly, in the writer's opinion, would be the reply. I cannot but conceive this a cause (remote or proximate) of that almost universal lapse into Arianism or Unitarianism of the old Presbyterian congregations in this country, which were in doctrine identical, and in discipline and order of worship all but identical, with the Independents. I venture to affirm this could not have happened, had the practice generally prevailed, to which attention is now solicited. — A PRESBYTER; *in the Congregational Magazine for February*, 1841, pp. 84–5

The remarks of "A Presbyter" in your valuable periodical, "On the duty of directing worship to Christ," reminded me of a passage in the "Diary" of an eminently holy man, whose spirit has long since been estranged from the imperfections which attach to our most perfect acts of homage on earth, and prostrated itself, in blissful adoration, at the feet of the glorified Redeemer in heaven, — I mean the late Mr. JOSEPH WILLIAMS, of Kidderminster. "I have been frequently in doubt, of late," writes this sainted individual, "whether I should *pray to the Lord Jesus Christ, or not.* It has been my prevailing opinion that I should; and accordingly I have done it frequently, for many months, in my secret retirements, with lively emotions of soul; and I think I should do it more in family prayer, and more in public; but it is with some difficulty I bring myself to it, and I still find in myself a shyness of doing it." Amongst the causes which operated to impose a restraint upon this specific kind of devotional exercise, he refers to the fact that *no ministers*, in the circle of his acquaintance, were accustomed to pray expressly to the Lord Jesus, with the exception of the late Mr. BRADSHAW, who, on one occasion, in discoursing of the manner of transacting a covenant with each of the persons in the Sacred Trinity, urged the following formula: "Blessed Jesus! assert thy right, erect thy throne in my soul, and bring every power thereof, and every member of my body, into subjection to thy law." Besides this, he could not call to mind a single instance of direct address to him in prayer. Now it is extremely probable, sir, — indeed, the writer's past consciousness and observation attest the fact, — that others have entertained a similar doubt respecting the propriety of such direct appeal. . . . . Were it not for fear of trespassing too much on your pages, and of incurring the charge of presumption (which, perhaps, I have already done) in assuming the character of a teacher of my brethren and fathers in the ministry, there is a kindred theme, to which I would venture to call the attention of your readers: I mean the claims to divine worship of *the blessed Spirit*, the regenerator and sanctifier of the human soul. I am aware that this, as well as that under consideration, are clearly recognized in some of the sweetest strains of the Congregational Psalmody at present in use among us; . . but there is reason to believe, that the special mode of supplication, embodied in these devotional hymns, does not obtain, either in the pulpit, at the family altar, or in the closet, to the extent which it ought on the supposition of its being a scriptural formula. — A. E. P. of Lozells, Birham; *in the Cong. Magazine for April*, 1841, pp. 247–50.

I am perfectly agreed with your correspondent on the propriety and duty of addressing religious worship to Jesus Christ. . . . But, while this is my firm conviction, I also think with a distinguished advocate of the Divinity of our Lord [Dr. J. P. SMITH], and with, I presume, the generality of Christians, that "the revealed order in the economy of redemption and grace, and the authority of Scripture, lead to the persuasion, that the most usual mode of our devotional addresses should be to the Father, with explicit reference to the mediation of the Son and the influence of the Holy Spirit." The language of the New Testament, and the entire structure of the Christian system, so completely harmonize with this position, that the difficulty is rather to select than to find proofs of its correctness. "But the hour cometh," said our Lord, when referring to the dispensation he was about to introduce, "and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." When he had nearly completed its introduction, when he had nearly opened the new and living way to God, he said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you;" "At that day ye shall ask in my name." It is also quite evident, that the apostles understood our Lord as directing them to pray to the Father. Whatever occasional religious homage they paid to Jesus Christ, (and who that views himself as redeemed by his blood can fail to pay religious homage to him?) their usual worship was addressed to the Father. For the Ephesian Christians the apostle prayed, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him." He says, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The apostles doubtless addressed thanksgiving to the Redeemer; but their more frequent thanksgivings seem to have been addressed to the Father. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ;" "Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;" "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." The religion of the New Testament does not terminate in Jesus Christ. It is a great and glorious scheme to lead us through Jesus Christ to the Father. "Through him we have an access by one Spirit unto the Father." We may hence conclude, that although the worship of Jesus Christ is both the duty and the happiness of the

Christian, that his usual worship should be addressed to the Father; and that the worship of the Father, through the mediation of the Son, and by the aid of the Holy Spirit, is the grand, distinguishing character of Christian worship. If "the most usual mode of our devotional addresses should be to the Father," there may seem to be a difficulty in ascertaining the proportion which the worship of Jesus Christ should bear to that of the Father. This seeming difficulty will, however, vanish in Christian practice. . . . The worship of our blessed Redeemer, except in the form of singing his praise, is perhaps more adapted to personal than social, to private than public, worship. If, however, his worship be introduced into our public assemblies, and in the manner of the *Te Deum* associated with praises or with prayers to the Father, there will be required no small skill in the use of language to mark the transition from the worship of the Father to that of Jesus Christ, or from the worship of Jesus Christ to that of the Father; and to prevent the confusion which such a transition would otherwise occasion. — ANOTHER PRESBYTER; *in Congregational Magazine for April*, 1841, pp. 250–1.

Verily, the dogma of a Triune God leads to endless doubts and perplexities, some of its theories implying the recognition of a truth which is diametrically opposed to Trinitarianism itself; namely, that of the unrivalled Supremacy of one divine person or being, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Unnumbered times has it been declared, and in every possible variety of phrase, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are each God, the same in substance, and equal in power and glory, though they constitute in all but one God; and yet, as we learn from the quotations just made, a most respectable body of Christians — the English Independents or Congregationalists, who are professedly hostile to Unitarianism — are accustomed, not to address this Triune God, or to pray to the Son or the Holy Ghost, but to put up their supplications and thanksgivings to the Father alone, through the mediation of the Son. So strong, indeed, is the feeling of hesitation, in the minds of many Christians, as to the propriety of addressing their Master in prayer, that it appears the good Mr. JOSEPH WILLIAMS, of Kidderminster, frequently doubted whether he should pray to him or not; and, though it was his prevailing opinion that he should, confessed that he still felt in himself a *shyness* of doing it; referring to the fact, as one of the causes of the restraint imposed on him, that no ministers, in the circle of his acquaintance, were accustomed to pray expressly to the Lord Jesus Christ, with the exception of Mr. BRADSHAW, who, in a discourse on one particular occasion, directly addressed him. This disuse of Trinitarian worship — this practice of addressing the Almighty Father, almost, if not altogether, to the exclusion of any other person or being — is, we conceive,

an unconscious but a distinct acknowledgment of the truth of Unitarianism, and the best and most scriptural of all homage to the Anointed of God, who expressly commanded his disciples to pray to the Father, and who never once enjoined the worship of "the Trinity," or of "God the Son" and "God the Holy Ghost."

It is worthy of notice, that one of the writers, "A PRESBYTER," conceives that the cause of the almost universal lapse of the old Presbyterian congregations into Unitarianism has arisen from the practice of addressing the Father alone in prayer. We doubt not the correctness of the remark. Abolish dogmatism from the pulpit, particularly in addresses to the Deity; let the humble petitioner, casting aside the phraseology of councils and of schools, use that simplicity of language which characterizes the Bible, — and the truth of the Unitarian doctrine cannot be otherwise than eventually felt and recognized. Unscriptural hymns and liturgies, associated as these are with human creeds and confessions of faith, continually present to the mind of the worshipper the idea of a Trinity, of a suffering God-man, and of another agent called the Holy Ghost, with personal attributes and operations differing from those of the one only Paternal Spirit before whom the Christ bowed in all his acts of obedience, submission, prayer, and praise. But for these means of sustaining it, the popular theology would, we think, more speedily become purified, and more closely approximate, in its form and sentiment, to the simple, rational, and elevated religion of the New Testament, — all denominations of Christians, however they may differ in other respects, agreeing in no distant future to unite their voices and their hearts in ascriptions of praise to "the Lamb that was slain;" but reserving their profounder homage, their supreme adorations, for "Him who sits upon the throne," — the one Lord God Almighty, the single Cause of all existence, the unequalled and absolute Father of angels and of men.

CHAPTER VIII.

JESUS CHRIST INFERIOR TO GOD, THE FATHER.

SECT. I. — IN HIS NATURE AND HIS ATTRIBUTES, CHRIST INFERIOR TO GOD.

Whatsoever essence hath its existence from another is not God.
BISHOP PEARSON.

In Chapters V. and VI. a great amount of proof, yielded by the liberality, the learning, the unconsciousness, or the inconsistencies of Trinitarians, was adduced to show that the doctrine of a Triune God is either altogether unintelligible or absurd, and that it is not plainly and expressly declared in any one passage within the compass of the Bible; if indeed, without the aid of tradition and the church, it can at all be established. But many of these writers, particularly such as belong to Protestant ranks, while acknowledging the fact that there is no clear, explicit mention of a Trinity in Unity in the Scriptures, and that the dogma itself is far beyond the reach of human discovery, or even of human comprehension, contend that, by a certain process of reasoning, it may be deduced by the collecting and comparing of various passages relating to Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost; that divine titles, attributes, and works are ascribed in the Sacred Books both to the Son and the Spirit, equally as to the Father; and that, as nature and revelation alike declare the unity of the Divine Being, these three intelligences cannot be three separate and infinite Gods, but only three persons in one God. We have, however, already shown, by the aid of our Trinitarian brethren, that the notion of three essentially divine persons or agents must, from the very conceptions that we are obliged to form, imply the idea of three Gods, equal or unequal; and, with all reverence, we may venture to say, that, if the inferential mode of proving the Trinitarian dogma were legitimate, it would not establish its truth, but the obvious contradictions of the Volume in which it is contained. But Unitarians are not reduced to the necessity of believing that Holy Scripture teaches any doctrine so irrational. They find the clearest and most marked distinctions made by the sacred writers between God and Jesus Christ; between the universal Father and his best-belóved Son; between the Anointer and the Anointed; between the Sender and the Sent; between the primary Source of human

salvation, and the faithful Bearer, the meek and humble but perfect Performer, of his holy will, — distinctions all of such a character as necessarily to imply, not two divine persons, in any metaphysical or incomprehensible sense of the term, but two distinct beings, one of whom is Supreme, and the other subordinate or inferior.

So full and so resplendent is this evidence, that, though lacking clear and explicit proofs for the doctrine of a Triune God, and though naturally desirous of inferring a plurality of persons in the Deity from texts which seem to imply an infinite nature in Christ, Trinitarians have been compelled, by the force of truth, to acknowledge that in all the circumstances in which he was placed, and in all the offices and characters which he is represented in the Christian Scriptures as sustaining, — in the discipline by which he was prepared to act as the Messiah, in the instructions he delivered, in the miracles he wrought, in the goodness he exhibited, in the blessings and the warnings he pronounced, as well as in the trials he encountered, the sufferings he bore, the prayers he uttered, and the unbounded submission he manifested to the will of Heaven; and not only in all his condition and functions on earth, but also in that state of glory in which he is supposed to have existed before the creation of the universe, or to which, according to the divine decree, he was actually raised as the Lord and Ruler of the church which he had founded, — he was dependent on, and inferior to, the great Being who had sent him into the world to become its Saviour; and that the honor to which he is entitled from all his followers, if not from the hosts of heaven, should not rest on him as the object of supreme veneration, but ascend through him to the original Author of the gospel, — to the Spring whence flowed the existence, the goodness, the wisdom, and the power of the best and mightiest of divine Messengers; in other words, that "every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, TO THE GLORY OF GOD, THE FATHER."

The quotations that follow in this chapter will, we conceive, be found to bear out the remarks just made.

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§ 1. AS A DIVINE BEING, CHRIST INFERIOR TO THE FATHER.

"I can of mine own self do nothing," saith our Saviour, because he is not of himself; and whosoever receives his being must receive his power from another, especially where the essence and the power are undeniably the same, as in God they are. "The Son," then, "can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do," because he hath no power of himself but what the Father gave. . . . . The divine essence which Christ had as the Word, before he was conceived by the Virgin Mary, he had not of himself, but by communication from God the Father. For this is not to be denied, that there can be but one essence properly divine, and so but one God of infinite wisdom, power,

and majesty; that there can be but one person originally of himself subsisting in that infinite Being, because a plurality of more persons so subsisting would necessarily infer a multiplicity of Gods; that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is originally God, as not receiving his eternal being from any other. Wherefore it necessarily followeth, that Jesus Christ, who is certainly not the Father, cannot be a person subsisting in the divine nature originally of himself; and consequently, being . . . truly and properly the eternal God, he must be understood to have the Godhead communicated to him by the Father, who is not only eternally, but originally, God. — BISHOP PEARSON: *Exposition of the Creed*, Art. I. p. 48; Art. II. pp. 190–1.

In that state of his existence before the creation of the world, our blessed Saviour was partaker of the divine glory and happiness. He was not God the Father, who is the Principle and Fountain of the Deity; [but] he was God by participation of the divine nature and happiness together with the Father, and by way of derivation from him, as the light is from the sun. — Abridged from ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermon* 43; *in Works*, vol. iii. pp. 185–6.

What it [the eternal generation of the Son] signifies we know not any further than this, that it is the eternal communication of the nature and image of the Father to him, as an earthly parent communicates his own nature and likeness to his son. . . . . As for this expression, "the one true God," it is never attributed to Son or Holy Ghost, that I know of, either in Scripture or any catholic writer, though it is to the Father, whom our Saviour himself calls "the only true God;" for all three divine persons, as in conjunction with each other, being the one only true God, this title cannot so properly be attributed to any one person, but only the Father, who is the Fountain of the Deity. — DR. WILLIAM SHERLOCK: *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, pp. 16, 89.

Referring to the latter of these passages, Dr. SOUTH (in his "Animadversions," p. 135) says: "Whence I infer that then neither can the expression of 'God,' or 'the true God,' be properly attributed to the Son or to the Holy Ghost; forasmuch as the terms 'one God' and 'one true God,' or 'one only true God,' are equivalent; the term 'one God' including in it every whit as much as the term 'one true God' or 'one only true God,' and the term 'one true God,' or 'one only true God,' including in it no more than the term 'one God.'" — This witty and sarcastic divine is much displeased with Dr. SHERLOCK for making an admission from which the inference may be drawn that Christ can in no proper sense be called God, and says that Sherlock "seldom turns his pen but he gives some scurvy stroke at it."

All power and all knowledge are expressly ascribed to the Son of God in several plain passages. . . . The terms "Father" and "Son" convey to us no meaning, if they do not imply that the one derived his being from the other; and this is confirmed, when we read that the Son's power and glory and dominion were all given him by the Father. — DR. W. S. POWELL: Charge III.; *in Discourses*, p. 215.

I know that I have you [the grave Unitarian of the older school] on my side, because you are the principal evidence for what I have been maintaining. You never have made up your mind to abandon the name "Son of God." You find it in the Gospels. Your desire to assert the letter of them, against what you suppose our figurative and mystical interpretations, forces you to admit the phrase. You not only do so, but you make the most of it. You quote all the passages in which Christ declares that the Son can do nothing of himself, that the Father is greater than he, as decisive against the doctrine of our creeds. You do a vast service by insisting upon them, by compelling us to take notice of them. They are not merely chance sentences, carelessly thrown out, inconsistent with others which occur in the same books. You are right in affirming that they contain the key to the life of Christ on earth. You have suggested the thought to us, — you could not, consistently with your scheme, bring it forward, but it was latent in your argument, — that what he was on earth must be the explanation of what he is. Never can I thank you enough for these hints, for the help they have been to me in apprehending the sense and connection of those words which you cast aside. If the idea of subordination in the Son to the Father, which you so strongly urge, is once lost sight of, or considered an idle and unimportant school-tenet, the morality of the gospel and its divinity disappear together. You have helped to keep alive in our minds the distinction of the persons; and that, I believe, is absolutely necessary, that we may confess the unity of substance. — F. D. MAURICE: *Theological Essays*, No. V. pp. 70–1.

We have quoted more than is essential to our purpose, to avoid any appearance of injustice to our author. But the small side-thrusts at the "grave Unitarian" will scarcely ruffle his skin; and the position, that, because Christ is inferior to and distinct from the Father, he must possess a unity of substance with him, tends certainly to give no finishing blow to the life of Unitarianism. But this is to our purpose: Mr. MAURICE, emphatically agreeing with Antitrinitarians on this point, confesses the doctrine of the gospel to be, that Christ, the Son of God, is subordinate to the Father. If this language has any meaning, it will follow, as a truism, that the Son

of God is a different being from God, and cannot be put on a perfect equality with Him who is his Superior.

In his next paragraph, Mr. MAURICE takes in good part the "very strong and earnest protest" of the Unitarian "against idolatry;" and, if we mistake not, he implies that, without that protest, Trinitarians would have been liable to worship three Gods, instead of three distinct persons, the first of whom properly ranks, in his conception, as Supreme; but he quietly and good-naturedly turns round, and tells the Unitarian that he, too, needs to be on his guard, lest, from the sincerity and fervency of his admiration, he sets the man Jesus Christ "above God." To every friendly suggestion, let us all, whether Trinitarian or Unitarian, give heed!

When our Lord adds, *οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς, εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεὸς* ["There is none good but one, that is, God"], we are to understand, with Bishops PEARSON and BULL, the sense to be, that there is no being originally, essentially, and independently good, but God. Thus the Father, being the Fountain of the whole Deity, must, in some sense, be the Fountain of the goodness of the Son. Accordingly, the Antenicene fathers were generally agreed that *ἀγαθὸς* ["good"] essentially and strictly applied only to God the Father; and to Christ only by reason of the goodness derived to him as being "very God of very God." — DR. S. T. BLOOMFIELD, *in his Greek Testament;* note on Matt. xix. 17.

Similarly, MARESIUS, quoted with approbation by Dr. WHITBY, and followed by WILLIAM TROLLOPE.

"My Father is greater than I." He who imparts omnipotence from himself must stand thus, in internal relation, to him who receives that omnipotence, without derogating from the equality of the power imparted; as, even in the capacity of human paternity, there is an essential relation to sonship, which can only be expressed by "greater." The Father is still the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," whether in time or in eternity; whether in our Lord's assumed human nature, or in the mystery of his eternally generated divine nature. Though "the Father has put all things under the feet of the Son, yet it is manifest," as St. Paul reasons, "that He is excepted who did put all things under him." These, therefore, are "the great God, and our Saviour," described in Tit. ii. 13. — GRANVILLE PENN on John xiv. 28; *in Suppl. Annotations to the Book of the New Covenant*, p. 66.

A volume of extracts of a similar character might easily be made; but the above, with those previously given in pp. 392–6, will suffice to show, that, even granting the antiscriptural doctrine of Christ's possessing a truly divine nature and most of the divine attributes, we must, on the showing of many learned Trinitarians, regard him as inferior to the universal Father.

§ 2. AS A PRE-EXISTENT BEING, OR EVEN AS THE CREATOR OF THE WORLD, CHRIST NOT NECESSARILY GOD.

The most of his [Dr. BUSHNELL'S] proofs [of the Divinity of Christ] do not reach the point at all. They merely prove that our Saviour was superhuman, perhaps superangelic, but not that he was properly divine. For example, he first argues the Divinity of Christ from his pre-existence. But this obviously does not prove it. An Arian would say that our Saviour was pre-existent. If he had been no more than an incarnate æon or angel, he must have existed previous to his incarnation. — DR. ENOCH POND: *Review of Dr. Bushnell's "God in Christ,"* p. 15.

The remark of this writer, that pre-existence does not prove Divinity, is evidently and undeniably correct. But, if so acute and liberal a reasoner as Dr. BUSHNELL loses sight of this simple truth, we may expect that others of stronger prejudices and less judgment will regard all texts which seem to imply Christ's existence before his appearance on earth as equivalent to proofs of his divine nature.

It appears to me upon all occasions most unbecoming and presumptuous for us to say what God can do, and what he cannot do; and I shall never think that the truth or the importance of a conclusion warrants any degree of irreverence in the method of attaining it. The power exerted in making the most insignificant object out of nothing by a word is manifestly so unlike the greatest human exertions, that we have no hesitation in pronouncing that it could not proceed from the strength of man; and when we take into view the immense extent and magnificence and beauty of the things thus created, the different orders of spirits, as well as the frame of the material world, our conceptions of the power exerted in creation are infinitely exalted. But we have no means of judging whether this power must be exerted immediately by God, or whether it may be delegated by him to a creature. It is certain that God has no need of any minister to fulfil his pleasure. He may do by himself every thing that is done throughout the universe. Yet we see that in the ordinary course of providence he withdraws himself, and employs the ministry of other beings; and we believe, that, at the first appearance of the gospel, men were enabled, by the divine power residing in them, to perform miracles, *i.e.* such works as man cannot do, — to cure the most inveterate diseases by a word, without any application of human art; and to raise the dead. Although none of these acts imply a

power equal to creation, yet, as all of them imply a power more than human, they destroy the general principle of that argument upon which creation is made an unequivocal proof of Deity in him who creates; and it becomes a very uncertain conjecture, whether reasons perfectly unknown to us might not induce the Almighty to exert, by the ministry of a creature, powers exceeding in any given degree those by which the apostles of Jesus raised the dead. — DR. GEORGE HILL: *Lectures in Divinity*, pp. 333–4.

We perfectly coincide in these sentiments, but, with the writer, think "there is a strong probability," as will be shown in a future volume, "that the work of creation was not accomplished by any creature." If, however, it be necessary to understand the Introduction to John's Gospel, and other passages, to refer personally to Jesus Christ as the Creator of the material universe, we are led to think, from the general acceptation of the Greek preposition DIA, "through," in the New Testament, and from numberless places which represent our Lord as the agent or instrument of the Almighty, that he must have acted in this work as indeed a being extraordinary in power, but still infinitely subordinate to his God and Father, whom he uniformly exhibited in the character of a Superior, and of whom he was the Servant and the Messenger. See "Scripture Proofs and Scriptural Illustrations of Unitarianism," part i. chap. 2, sect. 1 (8), and sect. 2 (10–13).

I think I have a right to demand, that, unless you can show cause to the contrary, you should adopt the translation of διὰ as the instrumental cause in John i. 3, Heb. i. 2, and Col. i. 16; and, if so, confess that Christ was instrumental in the creation of the world, and therefore that he pre-existed at least. — BISHOP LONGLEY: *The Brothers' Controversy*, p. 49.

This passage [Col. i. 16, 17] is somewhat stronger than the others [1 Cor. viii. 6, and Heb. i. 3]. Yet not any of them seem decisive as to the question whether full and supreme Divinity, like that of the Father, belongs to the Son; for it is certainly not impossible to conceive of the power to create and to govern being conferred, and exercised instrumentally; an idea which the form of expression διὰ ["through"] seems to indicate. — JOSEPH HAVEN, Jun., *in New Englander for February*, 1850, vol. viii. (new series, vol. ii.) p. 9.

The passages of Scripture referred to above, and others supposed to teach or to imply the agency of Christ as the Creator of the universe, or as a pre-existent being, will be afterwards treated of in the order in which they occur in the Bible.

SECT. II. — DEFICIENCY OF PROOF FOR CHRIST'S EXISTENCE BEFORE HIS APPEARANCE ON EARTH.

God, who in various methods told
His mind and will to those of old,
Hath sent his Son, with truth and grace,
To teach us in these latter days.

ISAAC WATTS.

§ 1. CHRIST NOT THE LORD GOD, OR THE ANGEL OF JEHOVAH, WHO APPEARED TO THE PATRIARCHS AND THE PROPHETS.

The question as to the pre-existence of our Lord has but little bearing on the inquiry, whether he be an infinite being, and one of the persons in the Godhead; for, however high in rank, nature, or qualifications, no one could be underived, or be absolute in his perfections, unless he had been prior to all creation, or to production of any kind. But, when texts of Scripture that are thought to imply the existence of Christ prior to his birth are read and explained as if they involved the dogma of his divine nature, it may be well to show, that some, if not all, of them are susceptible of an interpretation which harmonizes better with the unequivocal language of Peter and Paul, and of Jesus himself, that he was, not only in appearance, but in reality, a "man."

Whenever it is said that God appeared to Jacob, or redeemed him, the meaning is, that God operates, not immediately, but by the instrumentality of an angel. . . . Some, who look very superficially on Sacred Scripture, assert that this is to be understood of the Messiah. — Abridged from BISHOP TOSTAT on Gen. xlviii. 15, 16.

When God is said to "appear" to any of the patriarchs, we are not so to understand it as if they had, or could have, a visible representation of him; but only that he signified his will unto them either in a vision, or by some sign, or by an angel. If they understood that the message was from heaven, the "Lord God" was said to have "appeared" to them; but that appellation respects not the appearance itself, the visible representation, but is the title of the Supreme Being, whose will was revealed unto them. Or, if the [Arian] translation may be admitted, then "the Jehovah *of* God" can mean only the angel of the Lord, without any foundation for supposing it to mean the Lord Christ. — DR. BENJAMIN DAWSON: *Illustration of Texts*, p. 8.

It is often said, that the Lord, the Most High God, "appeared" to the patriarchs, to Moses, and to the prophets, the ancestors of the

Jews; but, according to Jesus Christ's rule [John v. 37], the appearance, form, or shape which they saw was not the appearance of the Lord God himself; for never, at any time, did they see his shape. Again, it is often said that the Most High God spake to the patriarchs, to Moses, and to the prophets; but our Lord affirms that they never heard his voice at any time. How shall we reconcile this seeming inconsistency? The true solution, according to the Scriptures, is this; that the Lord God never spake or appeared in person, but always by a proxy, *nuncius*, or messenger, who represented him, and spake in his name and authority. It was this messenger of Jehovah, or angel of Jehovah, who appeared unto Moses, Exod. iii. 2, and who is called, in ver. 4, "Jehovah" or Lord (whence it is evident that he was no created human being); and who spake to Moses, in ver. 5, saying, "Draw not nigh hither," &c.; "I am the God of Abraham," ver. 6; and "I am that I am," ver. 14. All which words were pronounced by an angel, but are true, not of the angel, but of God, whom he represented. So a herald reads a proclamation in the king's name and words, as if the king himself were speaking. The word "Angel," both in the Greek language and in the Hebrew, signifies "a messenger," or *nuncius*, "an ambassador;" one who acts and speaks, not in his own name or behalf, but in the name, person, and behalf of him who sends him. Thus the word is frequently rendered in our authorized translation; and if it had always been rendered "the *messenger* of the Lord," instead of "the *angel* of the Lord," the case would have been very plain. — DR. T. HARTWELL HORNE: *Introduction to the Study of the Holy Scriptures*, part ii. book ii. chap. 7, sect. 6, 12.

Many of the Christian fathers, who unfortunately caught the passion of allegorizing the Holy Scriptures, or of converting them on all occasions into spiritual mysteries, from the later Platonists, the example of Philo, and the practice of the Jewish Rabbis, have considered "the angel," in this remarkable passage [Exod. iii. 2], as the second person of the Holy Trinity; and this opinion seems to have been too hastily adopted by some of our best commentators and old divines. On a critical examination of the text, it will appear perhaps that there is nothing to favor this mode of interpretation but the zealous desire of proving, on all possible occasions, the pre-existent state of the ever-sacred Messiah. To the usual interpretation of this passage, there are, among others, the following objections: 1. The prepositive article, or emphatic prefix, ה, in Hebrew is omitted before מַלְאַךְ. — 2. In referring to this remarkable incident, the proto-martyr Stephen says, Acts

vii. 30, "There appeared to him," *i.e.* Moses, "in the wilderness of Mount Sina, *an* angel of the Lord." The definite article "the," therefore, has, on this and other occasions, been improperly used in our translation. — 3. Much stress has been laid on the words of the original, מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה, "an angel of Jehovah;" but it is used also to denote the angel that "smote the Assyrians," 2 Kings xix. 35, whose destruction all commentators now ascribe to the operation of a physical cause in the hand of God; and it is employed to designate the angel "that came up from Gilgal to Bochim," Judg. ii. 1, where our translators have properly rendered it "*an angel* of the Lord," and put "messenger" in the margin. — 5. A more powerful objection arises from the reference which our blessed Lord himself makes to this very passage, where he tells the Jews, that the declaration, "I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob," was spoken by God, that is, by divine communication, without precisely defining the manner in which the Jews understood that form of expression. Now, had the Messiah himself been the speaker on this occasion, in his pre-existent state, would he have said to the Sadducees, "Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God?" Matt. xxii. 31; and would he thus have identified himself in name and character with the Father? Those who think this probable will not find a similar example throughout the whole of the Bible. — It has been said in favor of the usual interpretation of this and other divine appearances in the Old Testament, that the ancient Jewish Rabbis explained them by a reference to their expected Messiah. But it should be recollected, that the oldest of their comments on the Hebrew Scriptures are comparatively of very modern date, and, with respect to doctrines, are of no authority. They imported from Babylon, and the regions of their captivity, many notions respecting appearances, angels, demons, and other matters, which belonged not to their ancient Scriptures. On many points of doctrine, therefore, they were prone to error and superstition, but more particularly on all occasions that related to their promised Messiah. — It is not the object of these remarks to controvert in the least the acknowledged doctrine of the pre-existence of the heavenly Messiah. The reality of this doctrine forms no part of the present question; which is, whether our blessed Lord, as the second person of the Holy Trinity, appeared in his individual and appropriate character to Moses on the present occasion, or to any of the patriarchs before him. Those who think there is no sufficient ground for believing this will feel their opinion

strengthened perhaps by the consideration, that it is not recognized in the Liturgy or Articles of our church, and that there is no trace of any such doctrine to be found throughout the writings of the evangelists and apostles. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, indeed, says (chap. i. 1, 2), "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Now, as the "last days" meant that period which commenced with the advent of the Messiah, it is an intimation by the apostle, that he had not spoken to men before: otherwise, the nature of the subject required that he should have mentioned it. — Abridged from JOHN HEWLETT: *Commentaries*, vol. i. pp. 286–8, 561–2.

A great number of authorities of a similar nature might be cited; but the passages in which divine or angelic appearances are spoken of in the Old Testament will be taken up in their order, and explained, in the next volume.

§ 2. CHRIST'S BEING "SENT" OR "PROCEEDING FROM GOD," AND HIS "COMING DOWN FROM HEAVEN," PHRASES SIGNIFYING THAT HE HAD RECEIVED THE FULLEST INSTRUCTION AND AUTHORITY FROM THE FATHER.

Whatever we receive by the special gift of God is said "to descend from heaven." Thus, John vi. 58: "This is that bread which came down from heaven." James i. 17: "Every good gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." Chap. iii. 15–17: "This wisdom descendeth not from above," &c. In accordance with this sense, our Lord asked the Pharisees, concerning the baptism of John, "Whence was it? From heaven, or of men?" Matt. xxi. 25; and the new Jerusalem is said to "come down out of heaven, from God," Rev. iii. 12. — PHILIP LIMBORCH: *Theologia Christiana*, lib. iii. cap. 15, § 4.

When the Scriptures speak of Jesus Christ being "sent" into the world, they always refer to his commission from God to minister to the world, that is, to men; and respect not the time either of his birth or conception. In like manner, John the Baptist is said to be "*sent* from God," when he came to preach the baptism of repentance. . . . . It is very common with our Lord to distinguish himself as the Messiah by such like expressions as these, — of having "seen God," "learned of God," "proceeded forth from God," "come down from heaven," &c. &c. Which manner of speaking has given occasion

to divines to busy themselves about the metaphysical nature and existence of Christ. But it is very plain that these expressions can have no manner of reference thereto, and that from these two considerations, — 1. Because, wherever they occur, the context is sure to determine that our Lord speaks in reference to his office on earth; 2. Because, to suppose these expressions to relate to his metaphysical nature and existence, we must be forced to interpret them literally; which would make the greatest confusion among our ideas, and lay the foundation of the most absurd, impious, and contradictory opinions and tenets. Our Lord, therefore, must mean by them to assert, that he alone had a perfect knowledge of the will and counsels of God, which no man before him ever had; that God committed to him the full revelation of himself, and enabled him to declare and manifest the one true God to the world, as clearly as if the Son of man had actually ascended up into heaven, and there seen God and the things of the heavenly world, and then had come down from heaven with grace and truth, as Moses from the mount with the law. Jesus Christ, having such knowledge and revelation of the will of God as this, together with all power and judgment, doth with the utmost propriety use these expressions concerning himself, and that by way of appropriation and prerogative not belonging to Moses, John the Baptist, or any of the prophets; who, though true prophets, were still not from heaven, but of the earth, — brought not that heavenly light which was the life of men. In God only was this life, and with him was it hid from the foundation of the world; neither did it shine forth to the world till the coming of Christ, or the manifestation of God in the flesh. — BENJAMIN DAWSON: *Illustration of Texts of Scripture*, pp. 6, 7; 104–6.

The work from which we have just quoted forms the substance of eight sermons preached in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, in the years 1764 and 1765, by permission of the Lord Bishop of London, for the Lecture founded by Lady Moyer. Dr. DAWSON was a zealous but liberal adherent of the church of England, who in his own way defended this her dogma, that "in unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." But, though throughout the work he strenuously opposes the opinions held by Arians and Socinians as to the nature of Christ and the Holy Spirit, his interpretations of texts adduced in the controversy on this subject are, in general, Unitarian; and, with the exception sometimes of a peculiar phraseology, might well be followed by a believer in the simple humanity of our Lord.

SECT. III. — CHRIST'S SONSHIP NOT IMPLYING AN ESSENTIALLY DIVINE NATURE, BUT HIS BEING THE MESSIAH, HIS MORAL RESEMBLANCE TO GOD, AND GOD'S LOVE TOWARDS HIM.

Behold the Prince of Peace!
The chosen of the Lord,
God's well-beloved Son, fulfils
The sure prophetic word.

NEEDHAM.

Is the appellation "Son of God," by itself, an evident and irrefragable argument that the Son is truly a partaker of the same divine nature with the Father? We answer: If this appellation alone be considered, and no regard had to other Scripture passages by which the Deity of the Son is established, it may be clearly shown to be insufficient to prove this doctrine; for it is certain, that, on account of the gracious communication of the divine majesty, the title "Son of God" is attributed to our Lord Jesus Christ in respect to his human nature. — PHILIP LIMBORCH: *Theol. Christ.*, lib. i. cap. 17, § 10.

That the title "Son of God," when applied to Jesus our Lord and Saviour, is the same as "Christ," the Ambassador of God, sent by him for our salvation, no one can doubt who consults those passages in which, in themselves, or with others compared together, either the word "Christ" is, by way of interpretation, connected with "Son of God," as Matt. xvi. 16; xxvi. 63. Luke iv. 41. John i. 49; — or for this name, found in one text, is substituted in another the name "Christ," as Matt. xxvii. 40, 43, comp. Mark xv. 32. 1 John v. 1, comp. ver. 5 and chap. iv. 2; — or the phrases "Son of God" and "Son of man" are interchanged, as Mark xiv. 61, comp. ver. 62 and Matt. xxvi. 63, 64. John v. 25, comp. ver. 27; — or the Son of God is so described that to him are attributed what would be unsuitable unless applied to him as a man, an instance of which occurs in Luke i. 32, *seq* . . I know of no passage in Sacred Scripture in which this title can be understood of the divine nature of Christ. — J. AUGUSTUS NÖSSELT: *Exerc. ad S. Scripturarum Interpretationem*, pp. 130–1.

We hold it to be clear from the import of the terms employed, and from the context of innumerable passages, that this name, "the Son of God," is applied to Jesus as a man, and applied to him for this reason, among others, that he was "the image of the invisible God," and intimately united with him, as well as the object of his special

favor. Every child knows, that, in the Sacred Scriptures, men are often called the sons of God, on account of some remarkable connection with the Deity, or because they in some sense resembled God himself. Now, is it not evident that all these reasons join in one to render the name in question pre-eminently applicable to that man who sustained a relation to the Deity which no prophet ever had sustained (John i. 14; x. 38; xiv. 10); and who, as the Scriptures explicitly inform us, was the image of the Father (Col. i. 15), and beloved above all the other sons of God? Matt. xvii. 5. Col. i. 13. John iii. 35. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the title Son of God would have been perfectly appropriate to Jesus, considered merely as a man. And it is no less clear that this interpretation harmonizes fully with the context of many passages; such as Heb. i. 5. Rom. viii. 29, 32; but particularly John x. 31, a text often cited to oppugn our doctrine. — J. F. FLATT: *Dissertation on the Deity of Christ; in Biblical Repertory for* 1829, new series, vol. i. pp. 170–1.

The term "to beget" denotes, in many passages, not the communication of the divine nature to the Son of God, but his appointment to the kingly office, or the Messiahship. Thus the passage, Ps. ii. 7, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," though often cited in the New Testament, is never brought to prove the divine nature of the Son of God, but is always supposed to refer to the confirmation of his Messiahship by his resurrection from the dead. The same might be said of many other passages in which similar phraseology is used. — G. C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. xliii. III. (*c*).

Dr. KNAPP adds that "the name Son of God is, in some passages, given to Christ in designation of his higher nature, his equality with the Father, and his internal relation to him;" but, by the aid of other orthodox commentators, we intend to show, in future volumes, the utter lack of proof for supposing that in any one passage it is used to indicate a divine essence in Christ.

According to Matt. i. 20, Luke i. 35, Jesus was born into the world in such a manner as no other ever was; and, if applied to this circumstance, I see nothing improper in retaining the common version ["only-begotten"]. The term [*μονογενὴς*], however, may admit the sense of "dearly beloved," or "well-beloved." John only uses the term in reference to our Lord. The Septuagint use it for יְדִיד, Ps. xxii. 20; xxxv. 17; and often render the same word *ἀγαπητὸς*, "beloved," Gen. xxii. 2, 12, 16. Jer. vi. 26. Amos viii. 10. Zech. xii. 10. — DR. BENJAMIN BOOTHROYD on John i. 14.

Here I trust I may be permitted to say, with all due respect for those who differ from me, that the doctrine of the eternal Sonship of Christ is, in my opinion, antiscriptural and highly dangerous. This doctrine I reject for the following reasons: 1. I have not been able to find any express declaration in the Scriptures concerning it. 2. If Christ be the Son of God as to his divine nature, then he cannot be eternal; for "son" implies a father, and "father" implies, in reference to son, precedency in time, if not in nature too. "Father and son" imply the idea of generation; and "generation" implies a time in which it was effected, and time also antecedent to such generation. 3. If Christ be Son of God as to his divine nature, then the Father is of necessity prior, consequently superior, to him. 4. Again, if this divine nature were begotten of the Father, then it must be in time; that is, there was a period in which it did not exist, and a period when it began to exist. This destroys the eternity of our blessed Lord, and robs him at once of his Godhead. 5. To say that he was begotten from all eternity is, in my opinion, absurd; and the phrase "eternal Son" is a positive self-contradiction. "Eternity" is that which has had no beginning, nor stands in any reference to time. "Son" supposes time, generation, and father, and time also antecedent to such generation. Therefore the conjunction of these two terms, "Son" and "eternity," is absolutely impossible, as they imply essentially different and opposite ideas. — DR. ADAM CLARKE on Luke i. 35.

When Christ is called the image of the invisible God, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, *i.e.* of him; or the only-begotten of the Father, the Son of God; God's own Son; God's beloved Son; his dear Son, &c., — I understand all this phraseology as descriptive of his mediatorial nature and station. I know, indeed, that many of these texts have been appropriated by some Trinitarians to prove the divine nature of Christ: in my apprehension, however, this has been done injudiciously, and without any solid reason. Texts of this class may be found: Matt. xvii. 5. John i. 14; x. 36; xiv. 10; iii. 35. Col. i. 13. Heb. i. 5. Rom. viii. 29, 32. . . . . As Mediator, as Messiah, Christ was sent into the world; as Son, he filled, and acted in, a subordinate capacity: how, then, can his being Son in such a sense prove him to be divine? . . . Commonly and appropriately, it [the term Son of God] designates the incarnate Messiah, as born in a manner supernatural, Luke i. 35, comp. iii. 38; as the special object of divine love, Matt. xvii. 5. Col. i. 13. John iii. 35; and as exhibiting the best and highest resemblance

of the Father, Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3. John i. 14; x. 38; xiv. 10. Would theologians keep these ideas in view, I cannot help thinking they might be able to understand each other better, and to reason more conclusively. — MOSES STUART: *Letters to Channing; in Miscellanies*, pp. 158–9, 164–5.

The writer, however, says that the apostles sometimes use the term Son of God as a proper name, and as designating a distinction in the Godhead which he believes to be eternal; but, judging from Heb. i. 1–3, the only passage he refers to in proof of his opinion, we may without hesitation affirm, that the meaning which he himself attaches to the title in the above extract, as implying Christ's "resemblance to the Father," is far more probable, and that the apostles had no belief whatever in eternal distinctions in the essence of God.

There is a very large class of texts, which, either directly or by implication, make the Son of God inferior to the Father, and dependent from him. 1. The Son prays to the Father, John xvii. 1; xi. 41. He prays as the Son; prays that he may be glorified or honored by the Father as the Son. This certainly implies that as the Son he is dependent. 2. He avows his inferiority to the Father, and his dependence from him: John xiv. 28. Mark xiii. 32. John v. 19. Matt. xx. 23. 3. When the Son claims authority and power, he always represents them as received by donation from the Father, and, consequently, not originally and essentially his own: Matt. xi. 27; xxviii. 18. John v. 26, 27; vi. 57; viii. 54; x. 18; xvii. 2, 3, 6. 4. The Son is subordinate and subject to the Father: John vi. 38–40; xii. 49, 50; xvii. 4; iii. 16. 5. It was the Son of God that was given; the Son that was sent; the Son that was born, that agonized in Gethsemane, that died upon the cross, that was raised from the dead by the Father, was exalted to the right hand of God, was constituted the head of the church, &c. Nothing of all this can be predicated of Divinity; and it consequently shows, that, as the Son of God, Jesus is a man. — The apostles have given the same view of his Sonship. One or two texts only must suffice here: Heb. v. 5–9. All this [all that is expressed in this passage] is said of Jesus as the Son of God. He did not glorify himself, but was glorified by the Father; he did not constitute himself a priest, but was made such: both his Sonship and his priesthood were derived from the Father's good pleasure. As the Son, he desired to be delivered from death; as the Son, he prayed to the Father, who alone could save him from it; as the Son, he suffered, and learned obedience by his sufferings; as the Son, he was made

perfect, and was constituted the Author of salvation, by the will of the Father. Is it possible that the inspired author who wrote these things could have thought, that, as the Son, Jesus is God? Certainly not. Every sentence in this passage shows, that, with regard to his Sonship, he considered him a man. 1 Cor. xv. 24–28: Here the apostle describes the glory of the Son of God, in his universal reign over the creatures of God, as one which God the Father had given him; for it is He that put all things under his feet; and, in his highest glory, he, as the Son, is still subject to the Father, and the Father is all in all, — all in the Son, as well as in every creature in the universe. Can it be, that, when St. Paul gave this account of the Son of God, he considered him, as the Son, divine and equal with the Father? Certainly not. . . . We are told, indeed, that, inasmuch as Jesus Christ is not called *a* Son, but *the* Son, the use of the definite article, when the application of the title is made to him, shows that he is the Son of God in a sense peculiar to himself, and in which there can be no other Son of God, and, consequently, in a sense in which he is equal with the Father. But how can this consequence follow? A son is not necessarily equal with his father. In some respects, he never can be equal with him: he must necessarily be younger than his father; neither does the father derive his existence from the son, but the son from the father. But, passing over this ground of objection, we call Homer *the* poet, and Demosthenes *the* orator, and the first William of the kings of England *the* conqueror. Does this phraseology imply that there have been no other poets or orators or conquerors? The use of the definite article with the title Son of God, when it is applied to Christ, does indeed designate him as sustaining the relation of Sonship in a sense peculiar to himself; but the difference which it marks between him and other sons is not a difference of nature, but a difference of measure. — Abridged from DR. LEWIS MAYER, *in the Biblical Repository for January*, 1840; second series, vol. iii. pp. 150–4.

Amid all the influences favorable to a belief in the essential Deity of Christ, there is perhaps none so paramount in the orthodox mind as the unscriptural sense which is attached to the title "Son of God," and similar expressions, applied in the New Testament to our Lord. Forgetting that God is an infinite Spirit and a universal Parent, the Father of all who have been created in his moral image, and especially of those who devote their faculties and their lives to his service, Christians in general have been prone to form material conceptions respecting his nature, and to regard him in the

character of an Omnipotent and Supreme Man, — the mightiest, indeed, of Potentates, but still with human passions and feelings; not as infinitely blessed in his single and glorious being, but as producing other existences with an essence and with attributes identical with his own, rejoicing in the company of his fellows, of whom he is the Origin and Head, and holding with them converse and counsel of an ineffable kind. One of these divine persons was the Son of God, and another the Holy Ghost; each of them equal in nature, power, and glory with the Father, from whom they derived their being and their qualities. This, as has already been at some length shown, is Trinitarianism; at least, one of its forms, — the Athanasian, — that which has been most commonly defended by divines, professed by the laity, but, because contradictory in its language, not steadily and fully believed by any one.

But the idea of Christ's having been in essence the Son of God, either from all eternity or for an indefinite and inconceivable time before the creation of the world, has been so deeply stamped into the heart of Christendom by the creed and the catechism, that, whatever doubts may be entertained as to the absolute equality of the Son with the Father, there is little or no difficulty felt in supposing Jesus to have the same nature as God; as little, indeed, as in regarding Isaac to possess the same nature as his father, Abraham. With views of the Divinity so low and so human do men take the Bible into their hands, and despoil the titles "Son of God," "the only-begotten or well-beloved of the Father," of all their moral and celestial beauty, by investing them with significations earthly and unspiritual.

Happily, however, all Christians will not be bound with the bands, or be compelled to read with the glasses, of an Athanasius. Some will cast aside the swaddling-clothes of a childish and semipagan age, and, with a clearer and more heavenly vision, discern the truth as it is in Jesus, instead of groping amid the dim dogmas and unrealities that issued from the councils and the schools. Fraught with this free and more simple spirit are the sentiments we have just quoted, — sentiments the truth and excellence of which, in the main, must, we think, be perceived by every dispassionate reader of the Bible.

The Christ of the Holy Scriptures was no natural or essential Son of God; no physical or metaphysical emanation from the Father; no eternally begotten person or being; no second person of the Godhead, or of a Triune Deity; no God-man, possessed of properties destructive of each other; — but a man the most highly chosen and approved of God; the divinest of God's messengers and prophets, raised up and appointed by God to be the Redeemer of the world; filled with all the exuberance of God's spirit, — blessed by all the tenderness of the Father's love; more than *a* son of God, because more devoted than others to his heavenly Father; THE Son of God, the only-begotten and best beloved of God, because distinguished above all God's children — whether prophets or philosophers — by a deeper insight into God's designs, by a holier love for his character, by a more devout and reverent submission to his will.

SECT. IV. — CHRIST NOT CALLED "GOD," IN THE HIGHEST SENSE OF THE TERM.

A god on earth thou art. — SHAKSPEARE.

In a figurative sense, θεὸς ["God"] signifies "he who acts by the authority and command of God; he who on the earth represents the Deity." Thus magistrates and judges are called "gods," John x. 34, 35, comp. Ps. lxxxii. 6. Exod. xxii. 28. Ps. xcvii. 9; as also angels and princes, 1 Cor. viii. 5. Exod. vii. 1. — J. F. SCHLEUSNER: *Lexicon in Novum Testamentum*, art. Θεὸς, 4.

These [the passages which apply to Christ the unqualified appellation "God"] are not decisive in the present inquiry; for although they imply divine honor in some sense, yet, as it is possible the term may be employed in a secondary or figurative sense, they cannot be appealed to as necessarily denoting full and supreme Divinity. — JOSEPH HAVEN, Jun., *in the New Englander for February*, 1850; vol. viii. (new series, vol. ii.) p. 9.

To prevent mistake, it is but right to state that the author of this extract notices John i. 1, 3; Rom. ix. 5; 1 John v. 20; Tit. ii. 13, as texts which speak of Christ as God in the highest sense. He says that Heb. iii. 4 is "perhaps justly regarded as somewhat obscure."

PSALM xlv. 6, AND HEB. i. 8.

The Hebrew word אֱלֹהִים, in the text, designates the rank of a judge and sovereign; as if the Psalmist, in connecting it with that of the "throne" of the Messiah, meant to say that Jesus should be appointed by his Father the Judge of the living and the dead, possess the throne of David his ancestor, and reign over the true Israel . . . during all eternity. — AUGUSTIN CALMET on Ps. xlv. 6.

It will be proper to lay aside from this discussion the consideration of Christ's divine nature, not because we deny that doctrine, or think that no regard should be paid to it in treating of the regal power of Christ, but because, wherever they speak of him in the character of a sovereign, the sacred writers apply that imagery to him as man. . . . We have no hesitation in referring Heb. i. 8, 9, particularly to the human nature of Christ, and, with the distinguished interpreters who follow the great GROTIUS, to render ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεὸς, "God is thy

throne;" that is, God has conferred on thee regal authority; the word "throne" being used by the metonymy of the sign for the thing signified, and of the effect for the efficient cause. Thus "throne" is substituted for Him who set Christ on the throne, just as our Lord is often called "life," instead of him who imparts life; and as the Philippians, chap. iv. 1, are termed "the joy and crown" of Paul, because they refreshed his mind, and held him in honor. In the forty-fifth Psalm, from which the quotation is taken, there are no traces of the Deity of Christ; and since the words as they occur in this chapter of Paul's, together with the context, speak clearly of Christ's human nature, they cannot form an address to him as God. — JOHN AUGUSTUS NÖSSELT: *Opuscula*, fasc. ii. pp. 355–6, 358–9.

ISA. vii. 14, AND MATT. i. 23.

Here Christ is not manifestly called "God;" but the name "Emmanuel" is given to that son to intimate that God would be merciful to the human race. For God is said to be *with* those whom he favors. — ERASMUS: *Apologia ad J. Stunicam; Op.*, tom. ix. p. 310.

The name "Immanuel" denotes the certain aid of God against the Syrians and Israelites, and his preservation of the city in opposition to Sennacherib. — GROTIUS on Isa. vii. 14.

There is a presence of favor and distinction whereby God is said to be, in a peculiar manner, with those whom he loves and blesses above others. In this regard, the child here spoken of is justly called "Emmanuel," because, as St. Paul speaks, "God was in him reconciling the world to himself;" . . . and again, by him they "who were sometimes afar off are made nigh, have access to the Father, are accepted in the Beloved," 2 Cor. v. 19. Eph. ii. 13, 18, 19; i. 6. — DR. GEORGE STANHOPE: *Comment on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. iv. p. 198.

But the dean afterwards explains the title as indicative of the Saviour's divine nature.

What you say respecting the argument in favor of Christ's divine nature, from the name given him in Matt. i. 23, accords in the main with my own views. To maintain, as some have done, that the name "Immanuel" proves the doctrine in question, is a fallacious argument. Is not Jerusalem called "Jehovah our righteousness"? And is Jerusalem divine, because such a name is given to it? — MOSES STUART: *Letters to Channing*, *in Miscellanies*, p. 148.

Isa. ix. 6.

This [viz., "God"] is another name by itself, and not "the mighty God," as it is commonly rendered; the next word, גִּבּוֹר, "mighty" or "strong," being another of his names. The word אֵל, signifying "God," doth also signify "strong;" but, because it is most commonly used when God is spoken of, it is everywhere rendered "God." Yet from this we cannot firmly prove him to be God, no more than other men who have this name. Moses was Aaron's god; and there is so much proof besides even in this place, that we need not to argue from hence; for he that is the everlasting Father, and of whose government there is no end, is God indeed, without beginning or end. — Abridged from DR. JOHN MAYER *in loc.*

The Hebrew words, translated, in the common version, "the everlasting Father," are rendered by Bishop LOWTH and others, "the Father of the everlasting age."

אֵל גִּבּוֹר, "the mighty God," — thus the words signify, and in this sense are only true of our Saviour Jesus Christ. But אֵל has a lower signification, and may be rendered "potentate;" and in this, which I call the first and literal sense, they are applicable to Hezekiah. — SAMUEL WHITE *in loc.*

John i. 1.

It [the appellation λόγος] signifies, among the Jews and other ancient people, when applied to God, every thing by which God reveals himself to men, and makes known to them his will.... In this passage, the principal proof does not lie in the word λόγος ["revealer of God"], nor even in the word θεὸς ["God"], which in a larger sense is often applied to kings and earthly rulers, but to what is predicated of the λόγος, viz., that he existed from eternity with God; that the world was made by him, &c. — GEORGE C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. xxxvii. 1.

Perhaps no Scripture expression is more frequently adduced, or is quoted with a greater air of triumph, on behalf of the essential Deity of Christ, than this, — that "the word was *God;*" the argument being founded on two assumptions: 1. That John applied the term Logos, "word," as a personal designation of our Lord before his appearance in the flesh; and, 2. That he meant to call him "God" in the absolute or highest sense. But, orthodox as Dr. KNAPP was, and unwisely resting his belief in part on the phrase, "in the beginning," which, as admitted by Professor STUART and

others, does not of itself indicate eternity, he frankly owns that the "principal proof" of the Trinitarian doctrine drawn from the passage does not lie in the words "Logos" and "God;" and, for this admission, he assigns what to us appears to be a very satisfactory reason.

John intends to say, that the antemundane Logos is in such fellowship with God, stands in such a relation to him, that he may be called "God." If, now, there is any historical, though it may be a mediate, connection between the representation of John and Philo, then is θεὸς ["God"] to be taken in the same sense in which Philo, in order to distinguish the Logos from the absolute God (ὁ θεὸς), calls him simply θεὸς, without the article, and even ὁ δεύτερος θεὸς, "the second God," but with the express addition that this last expression is used only figuratively. If, as we have seen, John understood by the Logos a real divine person, and yet, as a Christian apostle, certainly adhered to the monotheistic idea of God in a higher and far purer degree (xvii. 3; 1 John v. 20) than Philo, — then must he, not less than Philo, have understood "the word was God" in a figurative sense. Thus the meaning of θεὸς would be nearly the same as that of θεῖος, "divine." But this equivalence of θεῖος and θεὸς is not allowed by New-Testament usage. We must, then, take θεὸς, without the article, in the indefinite sense of a divine nature or a divine being, as distinguished from the definite absolute God, ὁ θεὸς, the αὐτόθεος of Origen. Thus the θεὸς of John answers to "the image of God" of Paul, Col. i. 15. — Abridged from F. LÜCKE'S *Dissertation on the Logos, as translated in the Christian Examiner for May*, 1849.

JOHN XX. 28.

This has generally been considered an exclamation, and the words seem to admit it; but to me the sense appears to be, "Yes! he is truly my Lord and my God." The exclamation is a recognition of Jesus. I will not go so far as to conclude from these words, that he actually recognized, at the time, the divine nature of Christ, of which we have no trace amongst the apostles, previous to the effusion of the Holy Ghost; at least, it was not the common doctrine of the Jewish theology. But he rather names him in a figurative sense — as one risen from the dead — *his god*, whom he will always honor and adore; in the same way as Virgil, in his first Eclogue, only still stronger, addresses Augustus: "For he shall always be *my god:* the tender lamb from our folds shall often stain his altar." — J. D. MICHAELIS: *The Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, pp. 272–3.

It may be justly doubted whether the so lately incredulous, because prejudiced and unenlightened, disciple had then, or at any time before the illumination of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, any complete notion of the divine nature of Jesus, as forming part of the Godhead; yet there is reason to think that the Jews held in a certain sense the Divinity of the Messiah, though they had no adequate conception of the true nature of it. — DR. S. T. BLOOMFIELD on John xx. 28; in *Recensio Synoptica.*

ACTS xx. 28.

The true reading seems to be τοῦ κυρίου, "of the Lord." ... In the Nestorian controversy, many affirmed that nowhere in Sacred Scripture occurs the expression, "blood of God." The reading θεοῦ, "of God," rests chiefly on the authority of the Latin Vulgate. The author of the ancient Syriac version reads τοῦ Χριστοῦ, "of Christ. The manuscripts which have θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου, "of Lord and God," are recent, and of very little value. — J. G. ROSENMÜLLER *in loc.*

Acts xx. 28, where θεοῦ ["God"] is the common reading, and κυρίου ["Lord"] is the one more recently preferred by most critics, ... I would gladly view as a *textus emendandus*, and cheerfully substitute κυρίου for θεοῦ, inasmuch as *alμα* θεοῦ ["blood of God"], which the common reading would imply, is an expression utterly foreign to the Bible. A God whose blood was shed must surely be a θεὸς δεύτερος ["secondary God"], as the Arians would have it, and not the impassible and eternal God, which I believe the Logos to be. — MOSES STUART, *in the Biblical Repository for April*, 1838; vol. xi. p. 315.

It would appear, then, that, notwithstanding the many thousand times that this passage has been appealed to as containing decisive proof for the essential and eternal Divinity of Christ, the reading on which the argument rests is more favorable to the old Arian than to the Trinitarian view of our Lord's nature.

ROM. ix. 5.

It need not surprise us, that Christ in the flesh is called "God over all blessed for ever," since "God hath highly exalted him" in the human nature, "and given him a name above every name," &c., Phil. ii. 9; and "hath put all things under his feet," 1 Cor. xv. 27; "and will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained," Acts xvii. 31. — DR. JAMES MACKNIGHT on Rom. ix. 5.

The only way in which any avoiding of its force [the force of this text] is practicable, seems to be, to assert that ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς

is meant to designate mérely the supremacy of Christ as Mediator, in which capacity he is *quasi Deus*, and in the like capacity is styled אֱלֹהִים ["God"] in Ps. xlv. In pursuing this course, more probability than is now exhibited in the various evasions that I have above noticed, and also more ingenuousness, might be shown. But still, &c. — MOSES STUART, *in Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans.*

With the aid of other learned Trinitarians, we mean to show, in the proper place, that the words rendered, in the common version, "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever," may be translated, in accordance with Paul's usual sentiments, as a doxology to the Father: "Christ came. God, who is over all, be blessed for ever."

1 TIM. iii. 16.

In reference to the Arian hypothesis, this place can scarcely be urged as decisive against it, unless in connection with others. Arians do not deny that the title "God" is given to Jesus Christ in the New Testament, though they are far from thinking him to be true or supreme God. His manifestation in the flesh has, accordingly, been sometimes explained by them of the Word, or Logos, uniting himself to the man Christ Jesus, and supplying in him the place of a human soul. If θεὸς be interpreted of a divine nature simply, as some take it, it is easy, say they, to perceive how a divine nature was exhibited by Jesus in the precepts he delivered, the actions he performed, the pure doctrines he inculcated, and the patience in suffering he evinced. Such is the way in which some Arians reason; and to refute them from the present reading, θεὸς, is difficult. Other considerations must be urged against them; for I cannot see that θεὸς is of overwhelming weight, in opposition to their particular opinions. — DR. SAMUEL DAVIDSON: *Lectures on Biblical Criticism*, pp. 160–1.

The passage here cited from Dr. DAVIDSON is omitted in the last edition of his work; or, to speak with greater accuracy, it does not appear in that entitled "*A Treatise* on Biblical Criticism," so much altered that he calls it in his Preface "a new book," containing his "latest and most mature judgments." But in the latter work he says (vol. ii. p. 403), what is equally to our purpose, that the text "is by no means decisive either for or against the proper Divinity of Christ;" and that "too much stress has been laid upon it in doctrinal controversies respecting the person of the Redeemer;" closing with an acknowledgment, that he "fully agrees" with Professor STUART in the remarks made by him in the Biblical Repository for January, 1832 (vol. ii. p. 79); and which, because of their appropriateness, we intend to quote in a future volume.

TITUS ii. 13.

Why is he [Jesus Christ] here called "the *great* God"? The reason may be, because in Jesus Christ the Father displays his goodness, the greatness of his wisdom, truth, grace, John i.; the greatness and "fulness of his Godhead bodily," Col. ii. 9. — DR. ROBERT GELL: *Remains*, vol. ii. p. 418.

Granting for a moment, what we think is improbable, that the title "great God," as well as "Saviour," were here attributed to Christ, would not Dr. GELL's interpretation be demanded by a regard to the practice of St. Paul, whose usual manner is to speak of the Father as the original Source of all pre-eminence and greatness, and the Son as the agent, representative, or image of the Most High? — In passing, we may notice that GELL does not interpret the phrase, "fulness of the Godhead bodily," of what is called the hypostatical union or the incarnation of God the Son, but of the Father's displaying his greatness and fulness in Christ.

"The glorious appearing of the great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ."... The ὁ μεγάλος θεὸς, καὶ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν, of St. Paul in this place, denote the two persons whom our Lord expressed in the words, ὁ πατὴρ μείζων μου ["The Father greater than I"]. Some eminently pious and learned scholars of the last and present century have so far overstretched the argument founded on the presence or absence of the article, as to have run it into a fallacious sophistry, and, in the intensity of their zeal to maintain the "honor of the Son," were not sensible that they were rather engaged in "dishonoring the Father."... Though our blessed Lord is indeed Deity, yet he is such by generation and communication of the paternal nature of his heavenly Father; as he himself was always earnest to impress on the minds of his disciples. These observations are to be applied also to 2 Pet. i. 1. — GRANVILLE PENN: *Supplemental Annotations to the Book of the New Covenant*, p. 145.

HEB. iii. 4.

Most commentators, from WHITBY to STUART, suppose the words to be an argument to show the superiority of Christ over Moses, by showing that Jesus is God; but that requires us to *supply* at the end, "And Christ is God." The argument, too, would be brought forward with an abruptness very unlike any other in the Epistle. The sense of the whole passage is, I think, well represented by Archbishop NEWCOME in the following paraphrase: "He who constituted, or set in order, any society, hath greater honor than that society, or any part

of it. But Christ conducted the Mosaic dispensation as the visible Representative of God, John i. 18. I say, 'He who framed the household.' For every religious or civil body has some head, — the Israelites, for instance, when they were miraculously conducted out of Egypt, and received the law at Mount Sinai; but the supreme and ultimate Head of all things is God." This view of the sense is confirmed by the learned researches of DINDORF and KUINŌL, and leaves no real difficulty, except to account for the apostle's having subjoined this. — DR. S. T. BLOOMFIELD on Heb. iii. 4; *in Greek Testament*, fifth American, from the second London, edition.

After a few more remarks, Dr. BLOOMFIELD adds, that thus far he had written in the first edition of his work; but that, although there was only a change of difficulties, he was half inclined to adopt the opinion of Professor STUART, who interprets the word "God" here as applied to Christ.

1 JOHN v. 20.

It might be a question, whether the word "this" refers here to God, or to the incarnate Son, in whom he has revealed himself. In either case, the practical import of the words is the same. The connection, however, leads us to regard the reference to God as the prominent one, since God is afterwards contrasted with idols. The apostle has just been contemplating Christ as the Mediator of this fellowship with God. Hence we must suppose that in conclusion he sets forth this one prominent thought: This God, with whom believers thus stand in fellowship through Christ, is the only true God, and hence is the primal Source of eternal life: through him alone, therefore, we can become partakers of eternal life, in which is contained the sum of all good, as the highest good for the God-related spirit. In him, therefore, we have all which we need for time and eternity. It is true, indeed, as we have seen, that Christ, as the only-begotten Son of God, is called by John the eternal Life which was with the Father, and which has appeared on earth in order to impart itself to man. With these words he commenced this Epistle. But it is also appropriate, that, in closing, he should point to the primal Source, to Him who is himself that eternal Life which has poured itself forth into the only-begotten Son, and through him into humanity. — AUGUSTUS NEANDER: *The First Epistle of John practically explained*, pp. 317.

The reason assigned by NEANDER for attributing to the Father the phrase "eternal life" may be regarded as a sufficient answer to WARDLAW, STUART, and others, who lay the chief stress on it for applying to Jesus Christ the whole clause, "This is the true God, and eternal life."

JUDE 4.

The translation in our English Bible . . . I have adopted, not only because, according to it, two persons are spoken of as denied, — namely, "the only Lord God," and "our Lord Jesus Christ," — but because it represents Jude's sentiment as precisely the same with John's, 1 Epist. ii. 22, "He is the antichrist who denieth the Father and the Son." . . . Because the article is prefixed only to *μόνον θεὸν* ["the only God"], and not repeated before *κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν* ["our Lord Jesus Christ"], BEZA is of opinion that these epithets, *δεσπότην*, *θεὸν*, and *κύριον* ["Sovereign," "God," and "Lord"], belong all to Jesus Christ. But the want of the article is too slight a foundation to build so important a doctrine on. For, in the following passages, John xvii. 3; Eph. v. 5; 1 Tim. v. 21, vi. 13; 2 Pet. i. 1, 2, "God" and "Jesus Christ" are mentioned jointly, with the article prefixed to one of them only; yet every reader must be sensible that they are not one, but two distinct persons. Besides, *δεσπότης* is a title not commonly given to Jesus Christ, whose proper title is *ὁ κύριος*. — DR. JAMES MACKNIGHT: *Translation of the Epistles.*

Θεὸν, "God," is omitted by A [the Alexandrian MS.], B [the Vatican], C [the Ephrem], sixteen others, with Erpen's Arabic, the Coptic, Æthiopic, Armenian, and Vulgate, and by many of the fathers. — DR. ADAM CLARKE, *in his Commentary.*

REV. i. 8.

The alteration made in this text by GRIESBACH, viz., the omission of the clause, *ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος* ["the beginning and the ending"], and the insertion of the word *θεὸς* ["God"] after *κύριος* ["Lord"], appears to rest upon ample authority. . . . Since the description, "which is, and which was, and which is to come," is the same as that by which, almost immediately before, the Father is characterized, and distinguished from the Spirit and the Son, it must, I think, be allowed, especially if GRIESBACH's text be taken for our guide, that these are the words of God, even the Father. — JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY: *Biblical Notes*, pp. 85–6.

All the texts here slightly treated of will be discussed more at length in our future volumes, according to the order in which they occur in the Bible; and numerous other orthodox writers, of the highest standing, appealed to in support of the expositions which have been adopted by Unitarians.

See "Scripture Proofs and Scriptural Illustrations of Unitarianism," part i. chap. 1, sect. 9, on the use of the word "God" as applied to Christ.

SECT. V. — CHRIST TRAINED BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE TO ACT AS THE MESSIAH.

Christ is born, the great Anointed;
Heaven and earth his praises sing:
Oh, receive whom God appointed
For your Prophet, Priest, and King!
CAWOOD

Divine Providence had formed Jesus himself to be the supreme universal Teacher of mankind in such manner as was agreeable to his individual nature, his education, and the modes of thinking peculiar to his country and his time. It prepared him for his important work by means of the religious knowledge which was already contained in the Old Testament, and excited in his lofty mind the noble resolution to devote himself for the benefit of the whole human race; so that Jesus had a lively assurance that he was appointed by the Deity to lay down his life for mankind, and that he had received power from God to raise again his dead body from the grave, in order thus to found a new religion for the human race, and to deliver from the punishment of sin those who were not rendered unworthy of salvation by their own voluntary guilt. . . . God has at all times, in the revelations which he has vouchsafed, made this condescension to mankind [an accommodation to human weakness], in order to communicate to them all necessary knowledge concerning himself; and has therefore provided, as the Teacher of the human race, a man, in whom was exhibited, as it were, a visible image of his own highest perfections, John xiv. 9. Heb. i. 3. — G. F. SEILER: *Biblical Hermeneutics*, §§ 264, 266.

His whole history proves, that, even as a man, he [Christ] was not of the common and ordinary class, but one of those great and extraordinary persons of whom the world has seen but few; but he was like other men in this respect, that his talents and intellectual faculties did not unfold themselves at once, but gradually, and were capable of progressive improvement. Hence Luke records (ii. 52), that he προέκοπτε σοφίᾳ ["increased in wisdom"]. Hence, too, he learned and practised obedience to the divine command, and submission to the divine will, Heb. v. 8; he prepared himself for his office, &c. . . . Jesus was also learned in the Jewish law and all Jewish literature, although he had not studied at the common Jewish schools, nor with the lawyers: *vide* John vii. 15; . . cf. Matt. xiii. 54. Probably, divine

Providence made use, in part, of natural means, in furnishing Jesus with this human knowledge. Mary was a relative of Elizabeth, the pious mother of John the Baptist, and a guest at her house, Luke i. 36, 40. We may imagine, then, that Jesus received good instruction in his youth from some one of this pious, sacerdotal family. We see, from the first chapters of Luke, that Joseph and Mary belonged to a large circle of pious male and female friends, in whose profitable society Jesus passed his youth, and who contributed much to his education as a man, especially as they expected something great from him from his very birth, as appears from Simeon. — G. C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. xciii.

At a tender age, he [Christ] studied the Old Testament, and obtained a better knowledge of its religious value by the light that was within him than any human instruction could have imparted. Nor was this beaming forth of an immediate consciousness of divine things in the mind of the child, in advance of the development of his powers of discursive reason, at all alien to the character and progress of human nature, but entirely in harmony with it. . . . . Although so many years of our Saviour's life are veiled in obscurity, we cannot believe that the full consciousness of a divine call which he displayed in his later years was of sudden growth. If a great man accomplishes, within a very brief period, labors of paramount importance to the world, and which he himself regards as the task of his life, we must presume that the strength and energies of his previous years were concentrated into that limited period, and that the former only constituted a time of preparation for the latter. Most of all must this be true of the labors of Christ, the greatest and most important that the world has known. We have the right to presume that He who assumed as his task the salvation of the human race made his whole previous existence to bear upon this mighty labor. The idea of the Messiah, as Redeemer and King, streamed forth in divine light, from the course of the theocracy and the scattered intimations of the Old Testament, in full extent and clearness; and in divine light he recognized this Messiahship as his own, and this consciousness of God within him harmonized with the extraordinary phenomena that occurred at his birth. But the negative side of the Messiahship, namely, its relation to sin, he could not learn from self-contemplation... Although his personal experience could not unfold this peculiar modification of the Messianic consciousness, many of its essential features were continually suggested by his intercourse with the outer world. . . . We

may assume, that when he reached his thirtieth year, fully assured of his call to the Messiahship, he waited only for a sign from God to emerge from his obscurity, and enter upon his work. This sign was to be given him by means of the last of God's witnesses under the old dispensation, whose calling it was to prepare the way for the new development of the kingdom of God, — by John the Baptist, the last representative of the prophetic spirit of the Old Testament. — AUGUSTUS NEANDER: *Life of Jesus Christ*, pp. 31, 41–2.

In the New Testament, we learn that the great Captain of our salvation did not encounter the powers of darkness, or enter upon his work, till he was anointed by the Spirit of God: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to...." He, though a personage of such a divine and extraordinary character, yet, considered as an instrument in this work (with reverence be it spoken), was not qualified for it till the Spirit had descended upon him; and, when he went into the wilderness, he was filled with the Spirit. — ROBERT HALL: *The Success of Missions; in Works*, vol. iii. p. 402.

The sacred writers do not seem to have ever felt any dread in stating the same sentiment, that the Messiah was an instrument or agent in the hands of his Almighty Father to accomplish the salvation of man.

It is from his [Christ's] discourses themselves that we are chiefly instructed in his pre-eminence as the great Prophet of God... Richly was he endowed, and abundantly qualified to be an instructive preacher. He did not rush into the ministry until his mind was thoroughly furnished for his work. For a long time he dwelt at Nazareth, diligently preparing himself for this high service; and so well had he studied the Sacred Scriptures, that at twelve years of age he astonished the doctors of the temple, "both hearing them and asking them questions." It was not till after his severe trial in the wilderness, where his faith and knowledge were put to the test of the most artful and severe of all opposers, nor until he was about thirty years of age, that he began his wonderful career. — DR. GARDINER SPRING: *Glory of Christ*, vol. i. pp. 136–7.

The writer of this passage very needlessly adds, that, "besides this, Jesus was God as well as man;" for surely *he* could not be the infinite and underived Source of all knowledge who "diligently prepared himself," by the study of the Old Testament, for entering on and pursuing that ministry of love with which God intrusted him.

The years of his life which were most veiled in obscurity were full of preparatory discipline, wisely adapted to the sublimest ends. The lowly circumstances of his infancy, the severe toils of his youth, and the varied experience of his early manhood, were doubtless designed gradually to awaken the full consciousness of that divine call, and fortify him with that perfect mastery over adverse powers which he displayed on entering upon his public life. From an infinite diversity of sources, sublunary and celestial, Jesus imbibed energies of every kind, which, with irresistible concentrativeness, were at length employed to redeem and renovate the world. . . . . He was diviner than they [than the heralds of the ancient theocracy], — had more character, and therefore was habitually more majestic and calm. He was equally private in his habits of life, was even more conversant with nature than his predecessors on the heights of inspiration; but he was imbued with Deity more than any man, relied incessantly on himself for augmented force, and exerted the greatest public energy, for the very reason probably that he threw abroad his heavenly grandeur from the shadows of the most humble sphere. . . . At the outset, oppressed as he was by toil and exclusiveness, he strove to stand the first among our race, an independent thinker, struggling for the suffering of every class, with head, hands, and heart disinthralled. . . . All that was needed to make him a tender Friend, a perfect Teacher, and a mighty Redeemer, he acquired by experience on earth, and transmitted for its hope. — E. L. MAGOON: *Republican Christianity, or True Liberty*, pp. 48, 63–4.

If Jesus "*gradually* awakened to the consciousness of his divine call;" if the energies which he exerted for the redemption of the world were "*imbibed* from an infinite diversity of sources," both of heaven and earth; if he was superior to the old Jewish prophets, or more divine than they, because he was "more conversant with nature than his predecessors on the heights of *inspiration*; if he was "*imbued* with Deity more than any man," and thus endowed, "relied incessantly on himself for *augmented* force;" if, at the commencement of his ministry, "he *strove* to stand the first among our race, an independent thinker;" and if "all that was needed to make him a tender Friend, a perfect Teacher, and a mighty Redeemer, he *acquired by experience on earth*," — surely, unless corrupted by an absurd hypothesis, common sense and universal reason will both exclaim, that this struggling, striving, suffering personage, who obtained by inspiration and experience the requisites for acting as the Teacher and Saviour of mankind, could not be, at the same time, what Mr. MAGOON in other places calls him, "Jehovah" or "God" himself, the inherent Possessor and absolute Fountain of all power and wisdom.

SECT. VI. — IN HIS OFFICES AND REQUISITE QUALIFICATIONS, CHRIST SUBORDINATE TO GOD.

Behold my Servant! see him rise
Exalted in my might!
Him have I chosen, and in him
I place supreme delight.
CHRISTIAN PSALMIST.

§ 1. CHRIST AS A DIVINE TEACHER, AND A WORKER OF MIRACLES.

When Christ appeals to his miracles in evidence of his Divinity, he does not suppose, that these, simply and in themselves, prove the Divinity of the person by whom they are performed; for, though real miracles cannot be done without divine power, God has often conferred this gift on mere men. Miracles, therefore, by themselves, do not prove that those who perform them are in nature God, but only that their mission and doctrine are true and divine. Hence Christ expressly says, "Though ye believe not me, believe the works" [John x. 38]. The apostles themselves performed many and great works, and in a more extraordinary manner than Christ did. What then? Do these miracles prove that the apostles were Gods by nature? By no means. Though Christ was from eternity the true God, yet I assert that his miracles do not in themselves evince his Divinity, but the truth of his doctrine. — Abridged from BRENTIUS; *apud Sandium*, pp. 135–7.

He to whom God, by doing miracles, gave testimony from heaven, must needs be sent from God; and he who had received power to restore nature, and to create new organs, and to extract from incapacities, and from privations to reduce habits, was Lord of nature, and therefore of all the world. — JEREMY TAYLOR: *Life of Jesus Christ*, part ii. Disc. 14; *in Works*, vol. iii. p. 105.

The bishop, however, inconsistently speaks of the great Messenger, who had "received" miraculous power, as evidencing by it the Divinity of his person.

Jesus Christ, whilst he was on earth, delivered all his doctrines and precepts in his Father's name, or as one sent from him, and authorized to speak what he delivered in his name. He preached his doctrines, and delivered his sayings, to the world, by virtue of that Spirit with which he was anointed. The miracles he did on earth, in confirmation

of his mission and his doctrine, were also done by the assistance of the Holy Ghost. Moreover, our Lord declares he did his miracles by "the Father abiding in him." Being then in his state of humiliation, and emptied of the form of God, he acted, in things relating immediately to his prophetic office, not as God, but only as a prophet sent from God; not by the power of his divine nature, but of that Spirit by which he was anointed and sanctified to that office. Though, being also God of the same essence derived from the Father, he might do many other things by virtue of his Divinity, &c. — Abridged from DR. DANIEL WHITBY: *Preface to the Gospel of St. John; in Commentary on the New Testament.*

We quote, without any hesitation, from this work of Dr. WHITBY; for, though in his latter years he retracted his Athanasian principles, and became a believer in the simple unity of God, his "Commentary on the New Testament" is still regarded by Trinitarians as of high orthodox authority, and is often appealed to without the slightest mention being made of his having corrected, in his "Last Thoughts," the Trinitarian sentiments which he had therein propounded.

He [Jesus] taught his great lessons of morality and religion, not as derived from the information of others, or from the dictates of his own reason, but as immediately conveyed to him from the Source of light and truth, from God himself. "Whatsoever I speak, even as the Father said to me, so I speak," John xii. 50. — BISHOP HURD: *Sermons preached at Lincoln's Inn*, vol. iii. (Sermon 4), pp. 65–6.

This remark is in much greater accordance with the statements in the Gospels than the assertion made afterwards by the bishop, that Jesus "spake, by virtue of his own essential right, from himself, and in his own name."

Christ, as the Messiah, received his commission from God, — every thing that related to the formation and establishment of the Christian institution. All his private conversations with his disciples or others, he, as man, commanded and spoke through the constant inspiration of the Holy Spirit. — Abridged from DR. ADAM CLARKE on John xii. 49

No one can carefully read the New Testament without feeling persuaded, that, as the Messiah, or God's anointed one, our Lord is the sum and substance of all its teachings; and that, though Jewish and restricted in its first acceptation, this name comprehends whatever is most divine in Jesus, and interesting to his disciples. If, then, Jesus, as the Christ or Messiah, was indebted to God, as Dr. CLARKE admits, for his commission to the human

race, and for "every thing that related to the formation and establishment" of his religion, then surely it would follow beyond doubt that he was not God himself, but subordinate and inferior to him.

Some commentators, after JEROME and THEOPHYLACT, refer this authority, with which Christ spake, to his delivering the law in his own name, as the original framer, and not the mere interpreter, of it. But this seems to be somewhat at variance with the declarations made by him upon several occasions, that his doctrine was not his own, but His that sent him, John vii. 16; xvii. 18, and elsewhere. Hence LIGHTFOOT and WHITBY suppose that he spoke as a prophet, having authority from God to deliver his message; not as the scribes, who merely interpreted the Scriptures according to the traditions of their forefathers. But the word ἐξουσία seems rather to denote the force and power with which he spake; his persuasive eloquence, irresistible arguments, and perspicuous statements, so different from the trifling and frivolous disputations of the doctors and scribes. — WILLIAM TROLLOPE on Matt. vii. 29.

He [Christ] himself frequently says, especially in the Gospel of John, that he performed the miracles which he wrought as man through a miraculous divine power, and as the Messenger of the Father. The case was the same as to his instruction. Neither Jesus himself nor the apostles ever alluded to his proper Divinity in such a way as to imply that it qualified him, as a man upon earth, to instruct, and work miracles. He had resigned his divine prerogatives, and his qualifications are always considered as derived from the Father. But this free renunciation of the privileges which belonged to him as God did not exclude the use of them when occasion should require. . . . . The New Testament everywhere teaches, that Christ, considered as a man, was qualified by God, for his office as Teacher, by extraordinary intellectual endowments; like the prophets of old, and his own apostles in after-times, only in a far higher degree than they. John iii. 34: God gave to him οὐκ ἐκ μέτρου τὸ πνεῦμα ["the Spirit not by measure"]. The prophets had these endowments, but in a less degree: he, as the highest Messenger of God, had them "without measure." Acts x. 38: ἔχρισεν αὐτὸν ὁ θεὸς πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ δυνάμει ["God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power"]. Jesus received these higher gifts of the Spirit, when John baptized him; for he himself submitted of his own accord to this baptism, by which the Jews were to be initiated into the kingdom of the Messiah. . . . Whatever, therefore, the man Jesus either did or taught after his baptism, he did and

taught as the Messenger of God; as an inspired man, under direct divine command and special divine assistance. . . . . *Prophet:* This name was given to Christ, not merely because he was a teacher, but also because he was a messenger or ambassador of God, according to the original signification of the word. He performed *all* his works, suffering and dying, as well as teaching, as prophet, *i. e.*, as the Messenger of God. — G. C. KNAPP: *Christ. Theology*, sect. xcii. III. (2); sect. xciv. I. (2); and sect. cvii. II. (4).

With the abatement of a few expressions naturally flowing from orthodox pens, the sentiments which we have just copied form an appropriate reply to the assertion not unfrequently made by Trinitarian controversialists, that Jesus delivered his instructions in his own name, without appealing to any authority but his own, and performed his miracles by his own underived and inherent power. We will not deny that our Lord taught with an authority far beyond that of any of the Jewish prophets, Greek philosophers, or oriental sages; but, with the Gospels in our hands, we do emphatically affirm, that the humble and holy being whose meat and drink it was to do the will of the Father, who passed whole nights in prayer to God, who spoke divine words because he had received without measure the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and did divine deeds because his God and Father was with him and in him, never on any occasion meant to claim equality with the Source of all intelligence and might, — never once implied that he was himself the Possessor of absolute and original perfection. But he was one with Him who was greater than himself; for, as an obedient Son, he wholly conformed to the rectitude of his Father's will. He could address the multitude, "I say unto you;" the leper, "I will, be thou clean;" and the paralytic, "Thy sins are forgiven thee:" for, as the Christ of God, as the approved and beloved of the Father, as the great Ambassador of Heaven, the Representative and Image of the Divine Majesty, he had the privilege of uttering his message to man in those tones of regal power and clemency which befitted his pure character and his sublime offices. He could say to the storm on the Lake of Galilee, "Peace, be still;" for on him the Lord of heaven and earth had conferred even a higher power than that of controlling the laws of nature, — the power of reigning over the minds and hearts of men, and of lulling to rest the tumults of human passion. He could declare to the anxious Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life;" for the infinite Father had made his Son the source of moral and spiritual life, — the announcer and the exemplifier of the soul's immortality. And he could tell the lifeless Lazarus to "come forth" from the tomb; for he had the full assurance that the Almighty Being whom he had just addressed in prayer heard approvingly his benevolent request, as He always had heard the petitions of his Son and Messenger.

See "Scripture Proofs and Scriptural Illustrations of Unitarianism," part i. chap. 2, sect. 1, (8); and part ii. chap. 2, sect. 7, (4) and (5).

§ 2. CHRIST AS LORD WHILE ON EARTH.

One who reads the Bible with reflection . . . is astonished to find, that, on the very first appearance of Jesus Christ as a teacher, though attended with no exterior marks of splendor and majesty; though not acknowledged by the great and learned of the age; though meanly habited, in a garb not superior to that of an ordinary artificer, in which capacity we have ground to believe he assisted (Mark vi. 3) his supposed father in his earlier days, — he is addressed by almost everybody in the peculiar manner in which the Almighty is addressed in prayer. Thus the leper, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," Matt. viii. 2. Thus the centurion, "Lord, my servant lieth at home," ver. 6. The Canaanitish woman crieth after him, "Have mercy on me, O Lord!" chap. xv. 22. He is likewise mentioned sometimes under the simple appellation of "the Lord" (John xx. 2), without any addition; a form of expression which, in the Old Testament, our translators . . . had invariably appropriated to God. What is the meaning of this? Is it that, from his first showing himself in public, all men believed him to be the Messiah; and not only so, but to be possessed of a divine nature, and entitled to be accosted as God? Far from it. The utmost that can with truth be affirmed of the multitude is, that they believed him to be a prophet. And even those who, in process of time, came to think him the Messiah, never formed a conception of any character as belonging to that title, superior to that of an earthly sovereign, or of any nature superior to the human. Nay, that the apostles themselves, before his resurrection, had no higher notion, it were easy to prove. What, then, is the reason of this strange peculiarity? Does the original give any handle for it? None in the least. For, though the title that is given to him is the same that is given to God, it is so far from being peculiarly so, as is the case with the English term so circumstanced, that it is the common compellation of civility, given not only to every stranger, but to almost every man of a decent appearance, by those whose station does not place them in an evident superiority. It is the title with which Mary Magdalene accosted one whom she supposed to be a gardener, John xx. 15. It is the title given by some Greek proselytes to the apostle Philip, probably a fisherman of Galilee, chap. xii. 21. It is the title with which Paul the tent-maker, and Silas his companion, were saluted by the jailer at Philippi, Acts xvi. 30. Lastly, it is the title with which Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator, a pagan and idolater, is addressed by

the chief priests and Pharisees, Matt. xxvii. 63. . . . Further, it is the title which those gave to Jesus, who, at the time they gave it, knew nothing about him. In this manner the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well addressed him (John iv. 11), when she knew no more of him than that he was a Jew, which would not recommend him to her regard. Thus also he was addressed by the impotent man who lay near the pool of Bethesda (chap. v. 7), who, as we learn from the sequel of the story, did not then know the person who conversed with him, and who soon proved his benefactor. . . . Our interpreters have, in this particular [in generally translating κύριος "Lord," instead of "Sir," when applied to Jesus in the Gospels], followed neither the Hebrew idiom nor the English, but adapted a peculiarity, in regard to Jesus Christ, which represents most of his contemporaries as entertaining the same opinions concerning him which are now entertained among Christians. Now, nothing can be more manifest than that, in those days, the ideas of his apostles themselves were far inferior to what we entertain. — GEO. CAMPBELL: *The Four Gospels*, Diss. vii. part i. sects. 13, 14.

§ 3. CHRIST AS SAVIOUR OR REDEEMER.

When we are acquainted by Christ for what end he came into the world, and suffered and died, and rose again, we may discover the wisdom and goodness of God in it, in sending us such a Saviour, and in qualifying him in so excellent a manner for the work of our redemption; but we cannot safely draw any one conclusion from the person of Christ which his gospel hath not expressly taught, because we can know no more of the design of it than what is there revealed. — DR. WILLIAM SHERLOCK: *Knowledge of Christ*, chap. iii. sect. 3.

It was because God the Father infinitely loved his Son, and delighted to put honor upon him, that he appointed him to be the Author of that glorious work of the salvation of men. — PRESIDENT EDWARDS: *Sermon* 3; *in Works*, vol. iii. p. 600.

As the grace of Christ is the meritorious, so the love of the Father is the original, cause of all spiritual blessings. The former source is traced to another still beyond. The Father is represented in Scripture as originating the salvation of man, as giving and sending his Son: "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son;" "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" [John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 10]. Jesus Christ always speaks of himself as sent by the Father. — ROBERT HALL: *Notes of Sermons; in Works*, vol. iv. p. 568.

The Lord Jesus uniformly represented himself as performing all his acts for the instruction and salvation of men, in the most perfect subserviency to the will of his Father, and dependence upon him; and this fact he stated in a variety of expression, and on different occasions, so as to manifest an anxiety to impress it deeply on his followers. — DR. J. P. SMITH: *Scripture Testimony*, vol. ii. p. 84.

The whole work of our redemption is attributed to God as its ultimate Author, and God is called our Saviour, because he produced the man Jesus by immediate creation, placed him in an entirely peculiar union with the Godhead; because God sent his Son; because Christ did, and still does, every thing according to the will of God; and because he was given us by God to be the Author of our salvation. — STORR & FLATT: *Biblical Theology*, b. iv. § 75.

He through whom the Deity opens, as it were, afresh his intercourse with human nature, becomes necessarily the Redeemer, not from one special spiritual burden, pressing on one particular period, but from the burden which weighed down the whole human race, at all times and everywhere. — E. L. MAGOON: *Republican Christianity*, p. 107.

Many citations of a similar character might be here introduced; but they will more properly come under the texts which they serve to explain.

§ 4. CHRIST AS MEDIATOR.

The mediatorial exaltation of Jesus Christ is everywhere in the New Testament attributed to the Father; as, for example, when it is said, after a description of his humiliation, "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above every name," Phil. ii. 10. — DR. J. P. SMITH: *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. ii. p. 84.

There is the utmost care taken in Scripture, . . . that, in all that Jesus did, he should be represented as acting in concurrence with the Father of all, for the fulfilment of his decrees, and the manifestation of his glory. The Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator and as conducting his mediatorial kingdom, is manifestly to be distinguished in Scripture from the Sovereign of the universe. As Mediator, he is inferior to the Sovereign of the universe. He is a servant (having taken on him the form or condition of a servant), engaged in a peculiar service, subordinate to the general government of the universe. In his person he was inferior to God; for when the Word, who was "with God," and who "was God," "was made flesh," and was "found in fashion as

a man," he descended to the condition of a created being. That one person, Jesus, the Mediator between God and man, who combined in his person the divine and human nature, was inferior to the invisible, eternal Deity, as unallied to any creature. He was a person formed, by the will and wisdom of God, for a particular end connected with his universal government: he had therefore a beginning, that is, there was no person uniting in himself the nature of God and man from eternity; and the person so constituted was necessarily inferior to Him who in this sense created him. And the Lord Jesus, thus constituted, was inferior to the Father of all, not only as to his person, but as to his office. He was appointed, delegated, sent to the fulfilment of it. He was Mediator between God and man, but not an independent Mediator, nor a Mediator provided by man; but a Mediator provided by the mercy and wisdom and power of God. — JAMES CARLILE: *Jesus Christ the Great God our Saviour*, pp. 317–18.

Because Christ is thus sent by the Father with a commission what to do and teach, it follows, even without the direct scriptural statement of the fact, that he is subordinate to the Father; since, without contradiction, he who sends is greater than he who is sent. The attempt to explain such declarations of our Lord as the following, "My Father is greater than I" (John xiv, 28), on the simple ground of his humanity, would be, in our apprehension, entirely unsatisfactory; for his subordination to the Father, as the receiver to the giver, extends to those offices that are manifestly above the capacity of a finite nature. Of that subordination of the Son to the Father which runs through all the scriptural representations concerning him, we have no new explanation to give; for we regard the old explanation, that of official investiture, as abundantly sufficient. The Son receives from the Father his mediatorial office in all its parts; he acts under him and by his authority, and is thus less than the Father; not merely as "the man Christ Jesus," but also as "God manifest in the flesh." But the question still remains, How can any but a Divine Being *receive* the office which the Father commits to the Son? — PROFESSOR E. P. BARROWS: *Article 2, in the Bibliotheca Sacra for October*, 1854; vol. xi. pp. 700–1.

By "a Divine Being," the writer evidently means God, or a being equal to God; for he adopts not the Arian hypothesis. But would it not be more rational to ask, How could a being who is infinitely powerful, and all-perfect in himself, have committed to him by another person any authority or office whatever?

SECT. VII. — THE MORAL CHARACTER OF CHRIST, THAT OF A FINITE AND DEPENDENT BEING.

Jesus alone, of all the human race, by the strength and light imparted from above, was exempt from sin, and rendered superior to temptation. — HORSLEY.

Such was thy truth, and such thy zeal;
Such deference to thy Father's will.
. . . . . .
Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervor of thy prayer.

ISAAC WATTS.

§ 1. AS EXHIBITED IN HIS HABITUAL PIETY.

Among the qualities by which Jesus is so peculiarly distinguished, there is none which more attracts our observation, and commands our applause, than a vigorous and fervent spirit of piety, an entire resignation to the will of God, an implicit submission to his pleasure. Nor is there any principle which he inculcates more earnestly and more frequently upon his disciples than the necessity and propriety of having recourse to God in prayer, of absolute dependence upon him, of the most ardent love and filial awe toward him, of the most anxious and incessant endeavor to obey his will and to promote his glory. The Being whom he thus professed to honor, and whom he enjoined his followers to adore, was undoubtedly the Jehovah of Israel, the Source to which Moses referred his authority, the Founder of the civil and religious polity established among the Jews. — BISHOP MALTBY: *Illustrations of the Truth of the Christian Religion*, chap. vi. p. 260.

It is apparent, from multiplied expressions of Jesus and from all his acts, that the will of his Father, which he was entirely certain that he perfectly understood, was the only rule and the living power of his conduct. To God, as the Source of his spiritual life, was his soul ever turned; and this direction of his mind was a matter of indispensable necessity to him. It was his meat and his drink to do the will of his Father. Without uniting himself to God wholly, consecrating himself to God unreservedly, feeling himself to be perfectly one with God, he could not have lived; he could not have been at peace in his spirit a single instant. . . . . In every thing which he said and did, he pointed to the Fountain of truth and goodness; to the Father, who permitted

the Son to have in himself, and to exhibit to man, a heavenly life that was pure, perfect, and self-sufficient. — CHARLES ULLMANN: *Sinless Character of Jesus*, sects. iv. and viii.; *in Selections of German Literature*, pp. 407, 444.

The piety of Christ was uniform and complete. His supreme love to God was divinely manifested in the cheerfulness with which he undertook the most arduous, and at the same time the most benevolent, of all employments; and, of course, that which was most pleasing to him, and most honorable to his name. His faith was equally conspicuous in the unshaken constancy with which he encountered the innumerable difficulties in his progress; his patience, in the quietness of spirit with which he bore every affliction; and his submission, in his ready acquiescence in his Father's will, while requiring him to pass through the deepest humiliation, pain, and sorrow. However humbling, however distressing, his allotments were, even in his agony in the garden and in the succeeding agonies of the cross, he never uttered a complaint. But, though afflicted beyond example, he exhibited a more perfect submission than is manifested by the most pious men under small and ordinary trials. No inhabitant of this world ever showed such an entire reverence for God, on any occasion, as he discovered on all occasions. He gave his Father, at all times, the glory of his mission, his doctrines, and his miracles; seized every proper opportunity to set forth, in terms pre-eminently pure and sublime, the excellence of the divine character; and spoke uniformly in the most reverential manner of the word, the law, and the ordinances, of God. At the same time, he was constant and fervent in the worship of God. — DR. TIMOTHY DWIGHT: *Sermon* 51; *in Theology Explained*, vol. ii. pp. 155–6.

That Christ was properly a human person will appear, if we consider the state and circumstances in which he was placed while he lived in this world. For, 1. He was fixed in a state of dependence. This he repeatedly and plainly acknowledged. "Then Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." Again he said, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but, as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." And again, "The words I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." These are plain expressions of his dependence upon his Father. And it was upon this ground that he so frequently

and devoutly prayed to his Father. Prayer always implies dependence upon him to whom it is addressed. The prayers of Christ, therefore, prove that he lived and moved and had his being in God as really as other men, and was as much dependent upon him for divine assistance, direction, and preservation, through the whole course of his life, as any other of the human race. He prayed for divine direction in the choice of his twelve disciples. He prayed for divine assistance to raise Lazarus from the grave. He prayed for Peter, and for all his apostles and followers, at the last passover he ever attended. And he prayed to be divinely strengthened and supported through all his agonies in the garden and his sufferings on the cross. His continual prayers were a continual and practical expression of his state of dependence during his continuance on earth; and his dependence was a demonstration of his real humanity. — DR. NATHANAEL EMMONS: *Works*, vol. iv. pp. 597–8.

The principal passages to which Dr. EMMONS refers are John v. 19; viii. 28; xiv. 10. Luke vi. 12. John xi. 41, 42. Luke xxii. 32. John xvii. Matt. xxvi. 36–44; xxvii. 46. Mark xiv. 32–39; xv. 34. Luke xxii. 41–45; xxiii. 34, 46.

He [Jesus] always withdrew at once from the crowd when his work was done. He sought solitude, he shrunk from observation; in fact, almost the only enjoyment which he seemed really to love was his lonely ramble at midnight for rest and prayer. He spent whole nights thus, we are told. And it is not surprising, that, after the heated crowds and exhausting labors of the day, he should love to retire to silence and seclusion, to enjoy the cool and balmy air, the refreshing stillness, and all the beauties and glories of midnight, among the solitudes of the Galilean hills; to find there happy communion with his Father, and to gather fresh strength for the labors and trials that yet remained. — JACOB ABBOTT: *The Corner-stone*, p. 61.

Not less indicative of his [Christ's] humanity was his perfect dependence. He was dependent on his parents, and indebted to their watchfulness and love, and labors and bounty. He was dependent on divine providence, and looked to its daily supplies. He was a man of prayer; and this alone is proof that he was sensible of his dependence on God. He made the frank avowal, "I can do nothing of myself." So absolute was his dependence that he could promise himself nothing but what his heavenly Father chose to give him from day to day. . . . . In the character of Christ, the love of God was ever supreme and ever constant. He could not love God more fervently or more

constantly than he did. His intellectual and active powers had their limits; but to the full extent of them he loved. He had no other, he knew no other, God. There was not an idol in his heart, nor an idolatrous thought or desire. When we read his biography, the delightful impression everywhere comes upon us, that he enjoyed a constant sense of God's presence. God was in all his thoughts; nor did such a sin ever lurk in his bosom as forgetfulness of his Father in heaven. His affections toward him were affections of love in all its sweet combinations of esteem, attachment, gratitude, and joy, and so cheerfully indulged that communion with him was his great solace and comfort, and the hiding of his face was the bitterest ingredient ever mingled in his cup. He had but one heart, and that heart was God's, — a whole heart, a pure heart, a heart never debased by an unworthy thought; a throne that was never usurped by a rival deity; a marble tablet, pure and burnished from its native quarry, on which was never engraven any tale of shame, and where suspicion never threw its doubtful shadow. . . . None so much as he ever delighted themselves in the diligent study of the divine nature and glory, or so much enjoyed the divine love. His affections toward God were eminently filial. He was the only-begotten Son, who "lay in the bosom of the Father:" the everlasting arms were his refuge and his home. His first and best thoughts, his first and warmest affections, his most delighted admiration, his most peaceful confidence and profound reverence, were attracted toward his Father which is in heaven. . . . . His peculiar character is most emphatically written in the words, "He went about doing good." It was an art he had studied well, and it was the care and business of every day. He aimed to be harmless; but he had higher aims. The infinite God was his example: he was perfect as his Father in heaven was perfect. Wherever he went, he wrapped himself in the mantle of that love, the very fold and hem of which were a refuge for the wants and woes of men. . . . So intent, so dominant, was his purpose, that he made the first and the last end of his existence to labor for God and man. . . . . His life was one of peculiar intercourse and near communion with God. Many a time did he rise up a great while before day, and retire to some selected mountain, or sequestered brook or grove, there to enjoy solitary intercourse with his Father in heaven. Whole nights he often employed in prayer. Forty days of fasting and prayer were his preparations for his public ministry. He loved to be alone with God. No employment, no society, no trials, ever prevented his inter-

course with God and heaven. He and his Father were one, if for nothing but the uninterrupted fellowship which existed between them. Things unseen and eternal were the things he looked at. He often spoke of them, and of the beauty and riches and glory of them, and of heavenly thrones and heavenly joys. With intense interest and delight he spoke of them, and with pensive thoughts that they were at a distance, and with sweet anticipations that in a little while he should go to the Father. . . . . There never was any reason why men should not be as holy as Christ, either in the nature of holiness, or their own nature; either in the binding force of the moral law, or the precepts, prohibitions, and spirit of the gospel. There is a cause for the imperfection of Christians, but there is no reason for it. The cause is their own sinful nature and love of wickedness. — DR. GARDINER SPRING: *Glory of Christ*, vol. i. pp. 81–2, 105–7, 114–15, 125, 129.

§ 2. AS EXHIBITED AMID TEMPTATIONS.

How are we to understand his [Christ's] first sufferings immediately after his baptism? It would be forcing common sense itself to suppose it not a real man, but a personage of a much more exalted nature, that was afflicted with the sensation of extreme hunger, that he might be induced to abuse and misapply the divine power of which he found himself possessed. As unnatural is it to suppose, that all the glory of this terrestrial globe was presented as a temptation to one who was of a nature so far surpassing not only that of men, but of angels and all created beings whatever. The prospect, how dazzling soever to human sense, could not possibly be a trial to such a being. . . . It is in respect of his human nature that our Saviour is set before us as a pattern for our imitation. His whole deportment through life witnessed a strong sense of duty to his Father, and an unremitted exercise of benevolent affections towards the human race. And as he lived, so are we exhorted to live; for in piety and true goodness we are capable of imitating him. Nor are we called upon to do more than it is our duty to do, more than human nature is capable of, more than what we know he as man did, when we are exhorted to live as he lived, "doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly before God." But conceive him, with regard to his behavior under those circumstances which to us are trials of integrity, to have had a nature different from and far superior to ours, and you can no longer consider him as exemplifying our duty by his own conduct, or derive from it encouragement to hope

for success in the like temptations assaulting our weaker nature. We may, on this supposition, admire and adore his vastly superior excellence; but we shall be ever discouraged in the pursuit of virtue, through difficulties that are looked upon to require more than human nature to struggle under with any hope of success. — DR. BENJAMIN DAWSON: *Illustration of Texts*, pp. 179–81.

These remarks, though levelled at the high Arian views of our Lord, seem to have still greater force if applied to the Trinitarian doctrine of Christ's person.

The most important passages which treat of the sinlessness of Jesus are 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 John iii. 3, 5; Heb. iv. 15; 1 Pet. i. 19. The texts also in which it is said that he was obedient to the will and command of God belong in this connection; as Heb. v. 8, and many passages in John. The virtue of Christ, in resisting steadfastly all the temptations to sin, acquires a real value and merit only on admission that he could have sinned. This opinion is, in fact, scriptural; for we are frequently exhorted to imitate the example of Jesus, in his virtue, his conquest of sinful desires, &c. But how could this be done, if he had none of those inducements to sin which we have, and if it had been impossible for him to commit it? Improvement in knowledge and in perfections of every kind is ascribed in Scripture to Christ; and Paul says that through sufferings he constantly improved in obedience, Heb. v. 8. We read expressly that Christ was tried, i. e., tempted to sin; but that he overcame the temptation, Matt. iv. 1, *seq.* This temptation took place shortly before his entrance upon his public office, and tended to prepare him for it. It was intended to exercise and confirm him in virtue, and in obedience to God. But what object could there have been in this temptation, if it had been impossible for Jesus to yield to it? and what merit would there have been in his resistance? No difference is made in the thing itself, and in its consequences, by considering it, with Farmer and others, as a vision and parable, and not as a real occurrence. If it was impossible that Christ, as a man, should sin, it would be hard to find what the Bible means when it speaks of his being tempted, and commends him for overcoming temptation. — Abridged from GEORGE C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. xciii. III.

Had Jesus made use of miraculous power for the purpose of exempting himself from those sufferings which were laid upon him by his Father, this would have impaired the perfection of his obedience, and would have been a positive non-compliance with the appointment

of his Father; for you will observe that his situation in the remote wilderness, and the consequent hunger which his distance from the supplies of food brought upon him, was not a thing of his own doing. He was led by the Spirit into his present situation: there he was by the will of God. It was not for him to do any thing, but to wait the issue of God's counsel concerning him. The language for him was, "My Father brought me here, and will carry me in safety out again." — Abridged from DR. THOMAS CHALMERS on Matt. iv. 4; in *Select Works*, vol. iii. p. 582.

This is probably a fair representation of the feelings of the tempted and holy One of Nazareth; and, if it is, how can it be reconcilable with the doctrine that he was not only a man, but Almighty God, the co-equal of the Father in power and glory? How unsuitable and unbecoming to say of the all-sufficient and infinite Jehovah that he was *led* into a particular situation by the Spirit of God; that, by his acting a selfish part, he would have impaired the perfection of his *obedience* to the will of his Father; and that the appropriate language for such a being was, "My Father brought me here, and will carry me in safety out again"! The figment of a double nature — that of a divine and a human, in the last of which alone Jesus here acted — will not remove the difficulties inherent in the orthodox interpretation; for of what use could the omnipotent nature of Jesus have been to him as a man, if he felt it necessary to have recourse in his trials and temptations, not to his own infinite perfections, but to the providence or the power of his Father? We are forced to employ words having an air of irreverence; but the fault lies in the character of the dogma we oppose.

He [our Saviour] was so entirely devoted to his Father's business, that half the readers of his life do not imagine that he had any of his own. But we must not forget that he was a man, with all the feelings, and exposed to all the temptations, of men. He might have formed the scheme of being a Napoleon, if he had chosen. The world was before him. He had the opportunity; and, so far as we can understand the mysterious description of his temptation, he was urged to make the attempt. . . . Christians seem to think, that his bright example is only, to a very limited extent, an example for them. But we must remember that Jesus Christ was a man. His powers were human powers; his feelings were human feelings; and his example is strictly and exactly an example for all the world. — JACOB ABBOTT: *The Corner-stone*, pp. 49, 50.

However interpreted, the moral purport of the [temptation] scene remains the same, — the intimation that the strongest and most lively impressions were made upon the mind of Jesus, to withdraw him

from the purely religious end of his being upon earth, to transform him from the author of a moral revolution to be slowly wrought by the introduction of new principles of virtue, and new rules for individual and social happiness, to the vulgar station of one of the great monarchs or conquerors of mankind; to degrade him from a being who was to offer to man the gift of eternal life, and elevate his nature to a previous fitness for that exalted destiny, to one whose influence over his own generation might have been more instantaneously manifest, but which could have been as little permanently beneficial as that of any other of those remarkable names which, especially in the East, have blazed for a time, and expired. — H. H. MILMAN: *History of Christianity*, vol. i. p. 156.

The remarks from ABBOTT and from MILMAN might have proceeded from Unitarian pens; for surely the writers must for a moment have forgotten their orthodoxy, and felt persuaded that the great personage who resisted the temptations of worldly ambition was a being strictly human in his nature, and not the Highest of intelligences, to whom the universe itself, with all its glories, can offer nothing which he does not inherently possess. To us it is inconceivable, that, on the supposition of his having been, in one of his alleged natures, absolutely perfect, Jesus could ever have been the subject of trial and temptation; that his mind could ever have been in the slightest degree impressed with the dazzling, but unsubstantial, honors of an earthly Messiahship.

Inward suggestions present the usual enticements to sin. This being the ordinary course of divine providence, the most natural interpretation [of the narrative of Christ's temptation in Matthew] is that which accords with it. Assuming, then, that the series of temptations was internal, though represented in the outward form of action, the subjective reality justifies the living external representation. A certain train of thought, embodying the current but incorrect views of the times, suggested itself to the spotless mind of Jesus, which he at once repelled without harboring. It is scarcely possible to realize the nature and severity of this trial, without having distinct ideas of the manhood of Jesus. He possessed all the natural feelings of the human heart. He was about to enter on public life. His contemporaries associated certain ideas with Messiah. They expected that he would be clothed with extraordinary authority. They thought that he would be endued with supernatural powers. They looked for a temporal prince, wielding the powers with which he was invested for his own advantage, relieving his wants, protecting himself from injury,

gratifying his own desires, and exalting himself to the highest earthly dominion. These were the sentiments of the time, which constituted the chief elements of the suggestions presented to the mind of Jesus. The ideas were artfully chosen, and were directed in some inexplicable way by the powers of darkness against the sinless soul of the Redeemer. They formed the most powerful assault that could have been made upon him, at the very crisis of his history, when he was about to appear in his public character, and found himself in a position which opened up prospects of the greatest magnificence, — the mysterious possession of the divine nature. The time and place are real, and literally correct. Jesus was in the wilderness, preparing himself by inward meditation for the great work of his public ministry. — DR. S. DAVIDSON: *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. i. p. 98.

The impressiveness and value of the representation here given of the temptations of Jesus seem to us to depend altogether on the conception, that he did not possess any other than a finite soul, capable of being turned aside from the path of duty.

§ 8. As exhibited in his Last Sufferings.

We find our Lord resorting to prayer in his last extremity, and with an earnestness, I had almost said a vehemence, of devotion proportioned to the occasion. . . . Throughout the whole scene, the constant conclusion of his prayer was, "Not my will, but thine, be done." . . . Prayer, with our blessed Lord himself, was a refuge from the storm. Almost every word he uttered, during that tremendous scene, was prayer; — prayer the most earnest, the most urgent; repeated, continued, proceeding from the recesses of his soul; private, solitary: prayer for deliverance; prayer for strength; above every thing, prayer for resignation. — DR. WILLIAM PALEY: *Sermons on Several Subjects*, No. VIII.

The whole scene of his [Christ's] approaching trial, his inevitable death, is present to his mind; and for an instant he prays to the Almighty Father to release him from the task, which, however of such importance to the welfare of mankind, is to be accomplished by such fearful means. The next instant, however, the momentary weakness is subdued; and, though the agony is so severe that the sweat falls like large drops of blood to the ground, [he] resigns himself at once to the will of God. — H. H. MILMAN: *History of Christianity*, vol. i. p. 332.

He [Jesus Christ] looked forward to the accumulation of sufferings which he knew would attend his last hours, with feelings on the rack of agony, with a heart "exceedingly sorrowful even unto death;" but with a meek and resigned resolution, a tender and trembling constancy, unspeakably superior in moral grandeur to the stern bravery of the proudest hero. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I held in anguish till it be accomplished! Now is my soul distressed, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour! But for this cause came I to this hour. Father, glorify thy name!" Luke xii. 50; John xii. 27. Through his whole life he was devoted to prayer; and, when his awful hour was come, "he was in an agony, and prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as drops of blood falling upon the ground," Luke xxii. 44. He was "sorrowful, and overwhelmed with anguish, and distressed to the utmost," Matt. xxvi. 37; Mark xiv. 33. "He fell upon his face, and prayed, and said, My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou willest," Matt. xxvi. 39. In his last hours, with a bitterness of soul more excruciating than any bodily sufferings, he felt as if deserted by his God and Father; while yet he promised heaven to a penitent fellow-sufferer, and died in an act of devotional confidence, triumphing that his work was finished. Thus he died: but he rose again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living; and he ascended to his Father and our Father, his God and our God. This was "the man Christ Jesus; a man demonstrated from God by miracles and prodigies and signs which God did by him, — a man ordained by God to be the Judge of the living and the dead," 1 Tim. ii. 5; Acts ii. 22, xvii. 31, xiii. 38. It is delightful to dwell on the character of this unrivalled man; not only because in no other, since the foundation of the world, has the intellectual and moral perfection of our nature been exhibited, but because the contemplation of such excellence refreshes and elevates the mind, and encourages to the beneficial effort of imitation. . . . . It was as a man that he suffered; and as a man he felt his sufferings, and prayed for their alleviation, or for deliverance from them. "Save me from this hour! If it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" The desire of relief sprang from the very necessity of human feelings, — feelings which proved him to be not an enthusiast, nor a deranged person; and the prayer for relief implied that limitation of knowledge which is inseparable from the condition of a created nature, and which belonged necessarily to the man Christ Jesus. Yet that this natural desire of deliverance from unutterable pain made no

infringement on the perfection of his creature-holiness is manifest from its being combined with the most absolute deference to the will of God. — DR. J. P. SMITH: *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. ii. pp. 96–7, 110.

In the arid deserts of so-called orthodoxy, sentiments such as these are beautiful and refreshing, but in our opinion diametrically opposed to the notion that the meek and holy being, who, amidst the severity of his sufferings, leaned on the arm of Omnipotence for support, was himself omnipotent and impassible.

In prayer and retirement, Christ had prepared himself for the beginning of his public ministry: in prayer and retirement, he now prepared to close his calling on earth. As then, so now, before entering upon the outward conflict, he passed through it in the inward struggles of his soul. Then he had in spirit gained the victory, before he appeared openly among men a conqueror: now the conquest of suffering was achieved within, before the final, outward triumph. Arrived at the garden, he took apart Peter, James, and John, his three best-loved disciples, to be the honored witnesses of his prayer, and to pray with him. From the nature of the case, we could not have so full an account of this as of his prayer for his disciples, John xvii. In the pains of suffering that are pressing upon him, he prays, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But this feeling could not for a moment shake his submission to the divine will. All other feelings are absorbed in the fundamental longing, "Thy will be done." The Divinity is distinguished from the Humanity; and, by this distinction, their unity, in the subordination of the one to the other, was to be made prominent. As a man, he might wish to be spared the sufferings that awaited him, even though from a higher point of view he saw their necessity; just as a Christian may be convinced that he ought to make a certain sacrifice in the service of God, and yet, in darker moments, his purely human feelings may rise against it, until his conviction, and his will guided by his conviction, at last prevail. It was not merely that Christ's physical nature had to struggle with death, and such a death; but his soul had to be moved to its depths by sympathy with the sufferings of mankind on account of sin. Thus the wish might arise within him, as a man, to be spared that bitter cup; only on condition, however, that the will of God could be done in some other way. But the conviction that this could not be, immediately followed. — AUGUSTUS NEANDER: *Life of Jesus Christ*, pp. 407–8.

The extracts we have made in this section, as to the profound piety of Jesus and his constant obedience to the divine will, seem, with but few exceptions, to be quite in unison with the simple and interesting narratives of the New Testament. They represent the character of our Lord, not as that of a person absolutely perfect, the primary Possessor and the infinite Source of all excellence, but as the best of God's children, the highest model of human virtue, the rarest, the only type of a future and a godlike humanity. They speak of him as drawing all his moral and spiritual life from a greater Being than himself, — from the bosom of the supreme and universal Father; as referring all his possessions, his instructions, and his works, not to himself, the original and uncontrolled Proprietor, Teacher, and Agent, — an infinite and eternal hypostasis in a Triune Deity, which became united to a finite and mortal nature, — but to the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of his Father and his God. They exhibit him neither as the blessed and only Potentate, nor as one of three Almighty Persons, who left the throne of his co-equals to dwell in a world, and live with and on behalf of men, the products of his own creative skill; and who, conscious of powers belonging only to an absolute and independent Being, never bent his knee, or prostrated his soul, before any God in heaven or on earth; but as a man, who, bearing a relation to the Supreme and Paternal Spirit higher and more intimate than that vouchsafed to any other holy personage or divine messenger, consecrated himself — all that he had and said and did — to the service and glory of God; devoting the affections of his childhood, the growing strength of his youth, the maturity of his powers, the excellence of his gifts, the inspirations of his Heaven-taught mind, and the throbbings of his human heart, — all his thoughts and words and works, his trials and his sufferings, his life and his death, — to the worship and praise, not of three co-equal and co-eternal persons, of whom he was the second, but of the One Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible, the true and the only God, who sent him into the world to be the Teacher, the Exemplar, and the Saviour of the human race.

Some Trinitarians speak of the sinlessness of Jesus as a proof that he was truly and essentially divine. We, on the contrary, regard it as affording the strongest evidence for his unqualified subordination to God, and are confirmed in our opinion by the mode in which it is presented by the orthodox writers whom we have quoted. It seems, indeed, amazing that any one can read with care the records of the evangelists, or the discourses and letters of the apostles, and at the same time believe that the moral perfections of their Master, which they represent as transcendent only because he was a more faithful follower of God than others, and was more obedient and resigned to his will, were the perfections of the ever-blessed and absolute Being. The argument, as Dr. POND (in his Review of BUSHNELL'S "God in Christ," p. 17) well observes, "is obviously defective. An incarnate angel might be sinless; nor is there any thing impossible in the supposition of a perfectly sinless man;" for "man once was sinless," and "ought to be sinless now."

See p. 411 for Dr. BLOOMFIELD'S note on Matt. xix. 17.

SECT. VIII. — CHRIST NOT GOD, BUT THE REPRESENTATIVE, THE MANIFESTATION, THE MORAL IMAGE, OF GOD.

Thou, LORD, by mortal eyes unseen,
And by thine offspring here unknown,
To manifest thyself to men,
Hast set thine image in thy Son.

MASON.

Whatever of the falsely or the superstitiously fearful imagination conjures up, because of God being at a distance, can only be dispelled by God brought nigh unto us. The spiritual must become sensible: the veil which hides the unseen God from the eye of mortals must be somehow withdrawn. Now, all this has been done once, and done only, in the incarnation of Jesus Christ; he being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. The Godhead became palpable to human senses; and man could behold, as in a picture or in distinct personification, the very characteristics of the Being who made him. Then truly did men hold converse with Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us. They saw his glory in the face of Jesus Christ; and the very characteristics of the Divinity himself may be said to have appeared in authentic representation before them, when God manifest in the flesh descended on Judea, and sojourned among its earthly tabernacles. By this mysterious movement from heaven to earth, the dark, the untrodden interval, which separates the corporeal from the spiritual, was at length overcome. The King eternal and invisible was then placed within the ken of mortals. They saw the Son, and in him saw the Father also; so that, while contemplating the person and the history of a man, they could make a study of the Godhead. . . . In no way could a more palpable exhibition have been made, than when the eternal Son, shrined in humanity, stepped forth on the platform of visible things, and on the proclaimed errand to seek and to save us. We can now read the character of God in the human looks and in the human language of him who is the very image and visible representation of the Deity. We see it in the tears of sympathy which he shed. We hear it in the accents of tenderness which fell from him. Even his very remonstrances were those of a meek and gentle nature; for they are remonstrances of deepest pathos, the complaints of a longing and affectionate spirit, against the sad perversity of men bent

on their own undoing. When visited with the fear that God looks hardly and adversely towards us, let us think of him who had compassion on the famishing multitudes; of him who mourned with the sisters of Lazarus; of him who, when he approached the city of Jerusalem, wept over it at the thought of its coming desolation. And, knowing that the Son is like unto the Father, let us re-assure our hopes with the certainty that God is love. — DR. T. CHALMERS: *Select Works*, vol. iii. pp. 161–2.

If we do not misunderstand the import of this extract, Dr. CHALMERS, though he uses some expressions which are of an unscriptural character, means to affirm that Jesus was the image of the Father, and the manifestation of God in the flesh, not because he was or represented God the Son (who, according to this divine, was the Jehovah who appeared visibly to the patriarchs and others), but because he imaged forth the moral character of the Deity, of the Invisible One, the Father, who became visible in the person, the offices, and the life of the Son of God, the man Christ Jesus. Such a sentiment is surely more in unison with the teachings of the New Testament than with the dicta of human creeds or the dogmas of a metaphysical orthodoxy.

Let us observe again, and be thankful for, the perfect wisdom of God. Even while presenting to us God in Christ, that is to say, God with all those attributes which we can understand and fear and love; and without those which throw us, as it were, to an infinite distance, overwhelming our minds and baffling all our conceptions, — even then the utmost care is taken to make us remember that God in himself is really that infinite and incomprehensible Being to whom we cannot, in our present state, approach; that even his manifestation of himself in Christ Jesus is one less perfect than we shall be permitted to see hereafter; that Christ stands at the right hand of the Majesty on high; that he has received from the Father all his kingdom and his glory; finally, that the Father is greater than he, inasmuch as any other nature added to the pure and perfect essence of God must, in a certain measure, if I may venture so to speak, be a coming down to a lower point from the very and unmixed Divinity. . . . It was very necessary, especially at a time when men were so accustomed to worship their highest gods under the form of men, that, whilst the gospel was itself holding out the man Christ Jesus as the object of religious faith and fear and love, and teaching that all power was given to him in heaven and in earth, it should also guard us against supposing that it meant to represent God as, in himself, wearing a human form, or having a nature partaking of our infirmities; and

therefore it always speaks of there being something in God higher and more perfect than could possibly be revealed to man; and for this eternal and infinite and inconceivable Being it claims the reserve of our highest thoughts, or rather it commands us to believe that they who shall hereafter see God face to face shall be allowed to see something still greater than is now revealed to us, even in Him who is the express image of God, and the brightness of his glory. — DR. THOMAS ARNOLD: *Sermons on the Christian Life*, pp. 238–40.

Whatever opinion may be entertained of some of the views presented in this extract, we think it unquestionable that the eternal and infinite Being who was pleased to manifest himself to the world in and through Christ, and who was the Source of all the kingdom, power, and glory, of which Christ was and is in possession, is greater than the recipient of his bounty; and that, however worthy his holy Son, Messenger, Representative, and Image may be of receiving our reverential regards and heartfelt obedience, God claims for himself our highest thoughts and profoundest veneration This is the uniform lesson of the New Testament, and seems to be inculcated here by Dr. ARNOLD.

No doubt, the benevolence of the Creator had awakened grateful feelings, and kindled the most exquisite poetry of expression, in the hearts and from the lips of many before the coming of Christ; no doubt, general humanity had been impressed upon mankind in the most vivid and earnest language. But the gospel first placed these two great principles as the main pillars of the new moral structure: God the universal Father, mankind one brotherhood; God made known through the mediation of his Son, the image and humanized type and exemplar of his goodness; mankind of one kindred, and therefore of equal rank in the sight of the Creator, and to be united in one spiritual commonwealth. — HENRY H. MILMAN: *History of Christianity*, vol. i. p. 207.

Here Christ is beautifully and scripturally spoken of, not as God the Son, but as the Son of God, "the image and humanized type of God's goodness;" one who, through his mediation, makes God known to mankind, not as a Triune Being, but as the universal Father.

Almighty God has revealed himself as the proper object of religion, as the one only Power on whom we are to feel ourselves continually dependent for all things, and the one only Being whose favor we are continually to seek; and, lest we should complain that an infinite Being is an object too remote and incomprehensible for our minds to dwell upon, he has manifested himself in his Son, the man Jesus

Christ, whose history and character are largely described to us in the Gospels; so that to love, fear, honor, and serve Jesus Christ, is to love, fear, honor, and serve Almighty God; Jesus Christ being "one with the Father," and "all the fulness of the Godhead" dwelling in him. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY: *Cautions to the Times*, p. 71.

Whatever shade of meaning the Archbishop of Dublin may attach to the scriptural expressions with which this paragraph closes, the main sentiment he inculcates is unequivocally Unitarian; namely, that "the only Being whose favor we are continually to seek," the Infinite and Incomprehensible One, "manifested himself in his Son, the man Jesus Christ." This sentiment is, we think, in perfect unison with the teachings of the New Testament, and in total opposition to the notion, either that three infinite persons manifested themselves, or that the second of these infinite persons manifested himself in what is termed the human nature of our Lord.

We accept the fact of the incarnation, because we feel that it is impossible to know the absolute and invisible God, as man needs to know him and craves to know him, without an incarnation. . . . . You cannot believe the words ["We beheld his glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," John i. 14], however habitual and familiar they may be to you, if there is that in them which contradicts the spirit of a man that is in you; which does not address that with demonstration and power. What we say is, that these words have not contradicted that spirit, but have entered it with the demonstration of the spirit and of power. Men have declared, "The actual creatures of our race do tell us of something which must belong to us, must be most needful for us. A gentle human being does give us the hint of a higher gentleness: a brave man makes us think of a courage far greater than he can exhibit. Friendships, sadly and continually interrupted, suggest the belief of an unalterable friendship. Every brother awakens the hope of a love stronger than any affinity in nature, and disappoints it. Every father demands a love and reverence and obedience which we know is his due, and which something in him, as well as in us, hinders us from paying. Every man who suffers and dies, rather than lie, bears witness of a truth beyond his life and death, of which he has a glimpse." Men have asked, "Are all these delusions? Is this goodness we have dreamed of, all a dream? — this truth a fiction of ours? Is there no Brother, no Father, beneath those who have taught us to believe there must be such? Who will tell us?" — What St. John answers is this: "No, they are not delusions. It has pleased the Father to

show us what he is. A man did dwell among us, — an actual man like ourselves, — who told us that he had come from this Father; that he knew him. And we believed him: we could not help believing him. There did shine forth, in his words, looks, acts, that which we felt to be the grace and the truth we were wanting to see. We were sure they were not of this earth; that they did not spring from that body which was such as ours is. We should have been ready enough to call them his. But *he* did not: he said they were his Father's; that he could do nothing of himself, only what he saw his Father do [John v. 19]. That was the most wonderful token to us of all. We never saw any man before who took nothing to himself, who would glorify himself in nothing. Therefore, when we beheld him, we felt that he was a Son, an only-begotten Son; and that the glory of One whom no man had seen, or could see, was shining forth in him, and through him upon us." — F. D. MAURICE: *Theological Essays*, No. VI. pp. 79, 81–2.

This passage may not be consistent with the other portions of the Essay from which it is taken; but we regard it as containing a beautiful summary of what John in his Gospel has recorded of his divine Master. It is not improbable that Unitarians may have felt too great a dislike to the word "incarnation," on account of the gross ideas which it has been so often made to express; but the term is not the less fitted to convey the truly scriptural doctrine, that the Absolute, the Infinite, the Invisible One, the Maker of the universe, and the Parent of all intelligences, has exhibited himself to mankind in a clearer and more affectionate manner by his well-beloved Son, than by any other teacher or agent, whether animate or inanimate, physical, intellectual, or moral; and that his union with Jesus, the Nazarean Man, was more real, intimate, transcendent, than any which has ever subsisted between the same Father and the best and greatest of his human children. But this doctrine is, we think, very different from that which regards Jesus as a second hypostasis in the Godhead, or as God himself, assuming human flesh, in order either to manifest his own divine nature, or to exhibit the character and will of a Triune Being; or as a single person uniting in himself the contradictory properties of Divinity and Humanity.

He [God] brings out the purity and spotlessness and moral glory of the Divinity, through the workings of a human mind called into existence for this purpose, and stationed in a most conspicuous attitude among men. . . . The moral perfections of Divinity show themselves to us in the only way by which, so far as we can see, it is possible directly to show them, by coming out in action, in the very field of human duty, by a mysterious union with a human intellect and human powers. It is God manifest in the flesh; the visible moral image

of an all-pervading moral Deity, Himself for ever invisible. . . . . God manifests himself in the blazing sun, the fiery comet, and in the verdure and bloom of the boundless regions of the earth; but these are not the avenues through which a soul burdened with its sins would desire to approach its Maker. The gospel solves the difficulty. "It is by Jesus Christ that we have access to the Father." This vivid exhibition of his character, this personification of his moral attributes, opens to us the way. Here we see a manifestation of Divinity, an image of the invisible God, which comes as it were down to us: it meets our feeble faculties with a personification exactly adapted to their wants; so that the soul — when pressed by the trials and difficulties of its condition, when overwhelmed with sorrow, or bowed down by remorse, or earnestly longing for holiness — will pass by all the other outward exhibitions of the Deity, and approach the invisible Supreme through that manifestation of himself which he has made in the person of Jesus Christ, his Son, our Saviour. — JACOB ABBOTT: *The Corner-stone*, pp. 25–6, 48.

Here, again, Christ is spoken of, not as manifesting any essentially divine nature and attributes of his own, but rather the moral glory and perfections of the Deity; of the invisible Supreme; of that paternal Being to whom he stood in the relation of only-begotten or best-beloved Son.

The reality of Christ is what he expresses of God, not what he is in his physical conditions, or under his human limitations. He is here to express the absolute Being, especially His feeling, His love to man, His placableness, conversableness, and His real union to the race; in a word, to communicate his own life to the race, and graft Himself historically into it. Therefore, when we see him thus under the conditions of increase, obedience, worship, suffering, we have nothing to do but to ask what is here expressed; and, as long as we do that, we shall have no difficulty. — HORACE BUSHNELL: *God in Christ*, p. 156.

This passage occurs as an explanation of Dr. BUSHNELL'S view of the person of Christ, in opposition to the common one that Christ had a human soul distinct from a divine nature. We introduce it here merely to illustrate our position, that Jesus Christ was not the Being whom he represented, any more than the external world is the Creator whose goodness and glory it manifests.

All the texts of Scripture which speak of the indwelling of God in Christ, of Christ's union with God, of his acting as the representative, or his being the image, of God, will be explained more fully in their respective places in the sequel of the present work.

SECT. IX. — AS HEAD OF THE CHURCH, AND AS JUDGE OF MANKIND, CHRIST DERIVED HIS POWER AND GLORY FROM GOD.

To Jesus' new commands
Be strict obedience paid:
O'er all his Father's house he stands
The Sovereign and the Head.

. ISAAC WATTS.

There was some kind of lordship given or bestowed on Christ, whose very unction proves no less than an imparted dominion; as St. Peter tells us that he was "made both Lord and Christ," Acts ii. 36. What David spake of man, the apostle hath applied peculiarly unto him: "Thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet," Heb. ii. 7, 8. Now, a dominion thus imparted, given, derived, or bestowed, cannot be that which belongeth unto God as God, founded in the divine nature, because whatsoever is such is absolute and independent. Wherefore, this lordship thus imparted or acquired appertaineth to the human nature, and belongeth to our Saviour as the Son of man. The right of judicature is part of this power; and Christ himself hath told us that the Father "hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man" (John v. 27); and, by virtue of this delegated authority, the "Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and reward every man according to his works," Matt. xvi. 27. Part of the same dominion is the power of forgiving sins; as pardoning, no less than punishing, is a branch of the supreme magistracy; and Christ did therefore say to the sick of the palsy, "Thy sins be forgiven thee, that we might know that the Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins," Matt. ix. 2, 6. Another branch of that power is the alteration of the law, there being the same authority required to abrogate or alter, which is to make a law; and Christ asserted himself to be "greater than the temple," showing that the "Son of man was Lord even of the sabbath-day," Matt. xii. 6, 8. This dominion thus given unto Christ in his human nature was a direct and plenary power over all things, but was not actually given him at once, but part while he lived on earth, part after his death and resurrection. For though it be true that "Jesus knew," before his death, "that the Father had

given all things into his hands" (John xiii. 3), yet it is observable that in the same place it is written, that he likewise knew "that he was come from God, and went to God;" and part of that power he received when he came from God, with part he was invested when he went to God, — the first to enable him; the second, not only so, but also to reward him. "For to this end Christ both died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living," Rom. xiv. 9. After his resurrection, he said to his disciples, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," Matt. xxviii. 18. "He drank of the brook in the way; therefore he hath lift up his head,' Ps. cx. 7. Because "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," Phil. ii. 8–11. Thus for and after his death he was instated in a full power and dominion over all things, even as the Son of man; but exalted by the Father, who "raised him from the dead, and set him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church," Eph. i. 20–22. — BISHOP PEARSON: *Exposition of the Creed*, Art. II. pp. 216–17.

God hath committed the administration of this judgment to Christ, that he might hereby declare the righteousness and equity of it, in that mankind is judged by one in their own nature, a man like themselves; and therefore we find that the Scripture, when it speaks of Christ as Judge of the world, doth almost constantly call him "man" and "the Son of man," Matt. xiii. 41; xvi. 27; xxiv. 30; xxv. 31. Acts xvii. 31. By the constant use of which expression, the Scripture doth give us plainly to understand that this great honor of being Judge of the world was conferred upon the human nature of Christ; for, as he is God, he could not derive this power from any, it being originally inherent in the Deity. Which likewise appears in those expressions of his being ordained a Judge, and having all authority and judgment committed and given to him, Acts xvii. 31; John v. 22. 27. — Abridged from ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON: *Sermon* 179; *in Works*, vol. ix. pp. 325–6.

In this place [Matt. xxviii. 18–20], you hear our Saviour declaring all power and authority to be given him at his resurrection; in consequence of which power, he commissions his disciples to convert, baptize, and instruct the world.... You see, likewise, that the powers delegated to the ministers of the church derive themselves from this power so received; and, consequently, all acts done by them in the name of Christ are founded in the power which he received at his resurrection.... The power over all things, the dominion both of the dead and the living [Rom. xiv. 9], commenced at the resurrection, which was indeed the very first step to glory and honor which our blessed Saviour took after his state of humiliation and sufferings.... What can be added to this description of power and authority? [Eph. i. 17–23.] And yet the apostle founds all this upon his resurrection, and his exaltation consequent to it. Then were all things put under his feet; then was he given to be Head over the church, and set above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named. The Scripture abounds in evidence of this kind. And I think there is nothing plainer in the Gospel than that Christ Jesus is our Lord, because he hath redeemed us; that he is our King, being raised by the Father to all power and authority; that he is our Mediator and Intercessor, being set down on the right hand of God in the heavenly places. All honor and worship paid to Christ, in and by the church of God, are founded in this exaltation. — BISHOP SHERLOCK: *Discourses*, vol. iv. pp. 58–9, 62.

Even in his human nature, he [Christ] was raised by God to a very illustrious dignity, John xvii. 5; Acts ii. 33–36; Eph. i, 20, *seq.*; Col. i. 17; Phil. ii. 9, 10. He is entitled to honor from every being, even from the higher intelligences, Heb. i. 6; Phil. ii. 9, 10; since he is henceforth raised in glory and majesty above all, 1 Pet. iii. 22. Hence a kingdom is ascribed to him, over which he reigns in heaven. He is called King, and divinely appointed Lord, Acts ii. 36; and κύριος δόξης, especially by Paul, 1 Cor. ii. 8, *i.e.* the glorious, adorable Lord. In Heb. i. 9, Paul applies to Christ the passage, Ps. xlv. 7, "God hath anointed thee with the oil of joy above thy fellows;" *i. e.*, God honors thee more, and gives thee more privileges, than all the partners of thy dignity, — the other kings, or sons of God.... The government of Christ is described by himself and his apostles as being, not external and temporal, but spiritual, conducted principally by means of his religion, by the preaching of the gospel, and the power which attends it. This government, which Jesus administers as a

man, is not natural to him, or one which he attains by birth, but acquired. He received it from his Father as a reward for his sufferings, and for his faithful performance of the whole work and discharge of all the offices intrusted to him by God for the good of men, Phil. ii. 9; Heb. ii. 9, 10. Christ learned by his sufferings to obey God, and do his will; and he who knows how to obey so well is also qualified to govern well. . . . . The phrase ["sitting at the right hand of God"] is never applied to Christ, except when his humanity is spoken of, or when he is mentioned as Messiah, θεάνθρωπος. The language, "Christ left his seat at the right hand of the Father in order to become man," was first used by the fathers who lived after the fourth century. Such language never occurs in the New Testament. "Sitting at the right hand of God" is always there represented as the reward which the Messiah obtained from God, after his death and ascension, for the faithful accomplishment, when upon earth, of all his work for the salvation of man. It is the promised reward which the victor receives after a long contest: *vide* Acts ii. 31–36; Heb. xii. 2. Hence the Father is said to have placed Jesus at his right hand, Eph. i. 20. This phrase, therefore, beyond doubt, implies every thing which belongs to the glory of Christ considered as a man, and to the dominion over the entire universe, over the human race, and especially over the church and its members, which belongs to him as a king. This is the reward which he receives from the Father. . . . . The holding of the general judgment, as well as the raising of the dead, is commonly ascribed in the New Testament to Christ, and represented as a commission or plenipotentiary power, which the Father had given to the man Jesus as Messiah, Rom. ii. 16; John v. 22, 25; Matt. xvi. 27; Acts x. 42, xvii. 31. Christ himself assigns it as the reason why God had intrusted to him the holding of this judgment, that he is a man, John v. 27, coll. Acts xvii. 31. God has constituted him the Judge of men, because he is man, and knows from his own experience all the sufferings and infirmities to which our nature is exposed, and can therefore be compassionate and indulgent, Heb. ii. 14–17, coll. 1 Tim. ii. 5. — Abridged from GEO. C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. xcviii.; sect. xcix. II.; sect. clv. I.

Of what nature is the κυριότης so often ascribed to the Saviour by Paul, and the other writers of the New Testament? Is it original or conferred? Does Christ as Messiah, and, in this capacity, as Lord of the church and of all things, possess original or delegated dominion? "God manifest in the flesh," the eternal Logos who "was with God,

and was God," — in a word, God-man, — this complex person might have a κυριότης that was delegated or conferred. Was this in fact so? Has Paul and his coadjutors taught us such doctrine? These questions I feel myself obliged to answer in the affirmative. The apostle, in Phil. ii. 5–11, states it as a ground of Christ's exaltation to be Lord of all, that "he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;" for, when he had made mention of this obedience, he immediately adds, "wherefore," *i.e.*, because he was thus obedient, he was exalted to a throne of glory. Consequently, the dominion in question was the reward of obedience; *i.e.*, it was conferred, bestowed, and not original. In exact accordance with this is the passage in Heb. ii. 10, which represents Christ as perfected in glory, advanced to the highest honor and happiness, as a consequence of his sufferings. Of the same tenor also are all those passages which speak of Jesus as exalted to the right hand of God, after his resurrection. So testifies also the beloved disciple: "Even as I (Christ) overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne," Rev. iii. 21; *i.e.*, his κυριότης, or *being enthroned*, was the consequence of his overcoming; viz., overcoming the temptations and trials of life, overcoming his spiritual enemies, and persevering even to the end in a course of entire duty and holiness. Again, John xiii. 3; xvii. 2; iii. 35; v. 26, 27; v. 22. With this testimony agree the declarations of Jesus as recorded by another disciple: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father," Matt. xi. 27. "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth," Matt. xxviii. 18. These are only a few of the many texts which speak plainly on the subject of the Messiah's conferred dominion. It is impossible to set them aside. Whatever dominion he possessed as Messiah, as God-man, as Mediator, as Head of the church militant, it is one which is bestowed. — Abridged from MOSES STUART, *in Biblical Repository for October*, 1831, pp. 749–51.

With the aid of Trinitarian divines, we showed, in preceding pages, that Jesus Christ, whether regarded as a superhuman being, who existed before his residence in the world, or as the Messiah with all the functions and qualifications requisite for his acting on earth in this character, received his existence, his possessions, and his powers, from his heavenly Father. In the present section, we have proved, with the same help, that our Lord, in that state of exaltation to which he was raised after the completion of his earthly course, was and is indebted to the same great Being for his regal power and dominion, — for his authority as the Head and Sovereign of the universal church.

SECT. X. — CHRIST NOT TO BE WORSHIPPED WITH SUPREME VENERATION, BUT WITH THE HONOR DUE TO ONE WHO FAITHFULLY PERFORMED THE WILL OF GOD, AND DIED FOR THE SALVATION OF MEN.

To Him who sits upon the throne,
The God whom we adore,
And to the Lamb that once was slain,
Be glory evermore.

SCOTCH PARAPHRASE.

§ 1. CIVIL, NOT DIVINE, HOMAGE PAID TO JESUS WHILE ON EARTH.

Should any one peruse the evangelical narratives with the requisite attention, he would hardly affirm that the persons who worshipped Christ while on earth acknowledged him to be the Son of God [in the Trinitarian sense, we suppose, is intended]. They believed, indeed, that he was a distinguished prophet, sent by the Almighty, by whose assistance he cured the blind, the deaf, and the lame; but they did not recognize him as the true Son of God. This is proved by the opinion of Nicodemus, John iii. 2; the confession of Peter and the other disciples, Matt. xvi. 13, 14; and the exclamation of the inhabitants of Nain, Luke vii. 16. Accordingly, the magi, the leper, the centurion, and others, though as yet they did not acknowledge Christ to be the Son of God manifest in the flesh, felt persuaded that the power of the Most High was exhibited in him; and therefore the wise men honored him as their King, and others sought aid and health from him as from a mighty Prophet of God. — ABRAHAM SCULTET: *Exercitationes*, lib. i. cap. 59.

I do not, in proof of this [that Christ is the object of divine worship], urge the instances of those who fell down at Christ's feet and worshipped him while he was on earth; for it may be well answered to that, that a prophet was worshipped with the civil respect of falling down before him, among the Jews, as appears in the history of Elijah and Elisha. Nor does it appear that those who worshipped Christ had any apprehension of his being God: they only considered him as the Messias, or as some eminent prophet. — BISHOP BURNET: *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, Art. I.

The bishop, however, excepts from such instances those in which the disciples are said to have worshipped Christ at his ascension.

Doing reverence by prostration is not only an act of worship paid to God, but often to kings and great men in the Old Testament, according to the custom of Eastern countries: see 2 Sam. ix. 6; xiv. 33. It was likewise an expression of reverence paid to prophets, on the account of the sanctity of their office, and not refused by them: see 1 Kings xviii. 7. Of this kind probably was the worship paid by the leper to Christ (Matt. viii. 2), whom he took for a prophet. — WILLIAM LOWTH on Dan. ii. 46.

Those who render, "they adored him," suppose that the magi were acquainted with the mystery of the Saviour's Incarnation and Divinity, which the apostles obtained only after his resurrection. I do not say this in order to favor a Christian sect that has false opinions on the person of the Saviour. It is certain that the Jews paid the homage of prostration to persons of dignity whom they respected. — ISAAC DE BEAUSOBRE on Matt. ii. 11: *Remarques*, tom. i. p. 10.

"To do him homage," *προσκυνῆσαι αὐτῷ*. The homage of prostration, which is signified by this Greek word in sacred authors as well as in profane, was, throughout all Asia, commonly paid to kings and other superiors, both by Jews and by Pagans. It was paid by Moses to his father-in-law (Exod. xviii. 7), called in the English translation "obeisance." The instances of this application are so numerous, both in the Old Testament and in the New, as to render more quotations unnecessary. When God is the object, the word denotes adoration in the highest sense. In old English, the term "worship" was indifferently used of both. It is not commonly so now. — DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL on Matt. ii. 2.

Προσκυνεῖν, in the New Testament, particularly denotes, "with the head and body bent, to show reverence and offer civil worship to any one; to salute any one, so as to prostrate the body to the ground, and touch it even with the chin;" a mode of salutation which was almost universally adopted by Eastern nations. Προσκυνεῖν also signifies "to bend the knee in reverence and honor, or in supplication;" corresponding, in this sense, to the Hebrew word, הִשְׁתַּחֲוָה, "he bent" or "prostrated himself at the feet of any one for the sake of honor and reverence;" for which it is used in the Septuagint, Gen. xviii. 2; xxiii. 7, 12; xix. i. Esth. iii. 2, 5, &c. . . . See Matt. ii. 2, 8, 11; viii. 2; ix. 18, comp. Mark v. 22 and Luke v. 12. Matt. xv. 25; xviii. 26; xx. 20; xxviii. 9, 17. Mark v. 6; xv. 19. John ix. 38. Acts x. 25. — J. F. SCHLEUSNER: *Lexicon in Novum Testamentum*, art. Προσκυνέω, 3.

§ 2. SECONDARY, NOT SUPREME, HOMAGE PAID, OR REQUIRED TO BE PAID, TO CHRIST, AFTER HIS EXALTATION TO HEAVEN.

The former kind of worship [to Jesus as God] is not different from that which is exhibited to God the Father: the latter worship is not absolutely supreme, and is suitable to Christ as Mediator, but subordinate to that of the Father, by whom it has been graciously communicated to Christ, and is expressly commanded in Scripture to be paid to him. It therefore follows, that this worship does not terminate in Christ himself, but tends to the glory of God the Father, to whom it is either expressly or tacitly referred; just as the honor which is manifested towards a legate does not terminate in him, but tends to the glory of the king by whom he is sent. Thus, Phil. ii. 11: "That every tongue should confess the Lord Jesus, to the glory of God the Father." The Lord Jesus is to be worshipped, because in his name every knee must bow, and every tongue confess him to be Lord; and because the basis of this worship is his exaltation by the Father, for having suffered the death of the cross. But surely these circumstances are suitable to him, not as God, but as man, and directly refer to his office of Mediator. The whole of this adoration is subordinate to that of the Father, and terminates in him; which is proved from the concluding words, "to the glory of God the Father." To this passage, and John v. 22, 23, may be added Heb. i. 6 from Ps. xcvii. 7. — PHILIP LIMBORCH: *Theol. Christ.*, lib. v. cap. 18, § 2, 5.

This unparalleled act of obedience God hath rewarded, by advancing his human nature to universal dominion, that the man Christ Jesus should now rule over, and be adored by, all creatures; that all nations should acknowledge this king, and, by submitting to his laws and government, promote the glory of God the Father, who delights to be honored in the belief and obedience paid to his blessed Son and his gospel. — DR. GEORGE STANHOPE on Phil. ii. 9–11: *Comment on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. ii. p. 433.

As the fundamental reason for which God the Father receiveth worship of the Jews and Gentiles is because he hath created all things, and preserves them by his will, to have it perfected and executed on them; so the fundamental reason for which the Son is worshipped is because he was slain, and shed his blood to redeem thereby all mankind. — CHARLES DAUBUZ on Rev. v. 9.

This writer afterwards endeavors to explain this Unitarian remark in conformity with Trinitarianism

In the Revelation of St. John, we have several hymns recorded, which the church of the first-born sing to God and to his Christ; and we cannot form our devotions from a better copy than that which they have set us. In the fourth chapter [eleventh verse], the four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord! to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Here you see plainly that the adoration paid to God the Father is founded upon his being the Creator of all things. Look a little farther into the next chapter [chap. v. 9, 10], and you will find the same persons praising and adoring Christ Jesus, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." Here you as plainly see the worship paid to Christ to be founded in this, that he was slain, and did by his blood redeem us; nay, the very choir of angels sing praises to him in the same strain [ver. 12], saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing." From all which it is evident, that the worship paid to Christ is founded upon the redemption, and relates to that power and authority which he received from God at his resurrection. . . . . Here [Rom. x. 8, 9] you see St. Paul requires all men to honor the Lord Jesus upon this account, because "God hath raised him from the dead." Every man must "honor the Son, even as he honoreth the Father" [John v. 23]. This honor paid to the Son must proceed from this principle of faith, that in your heart you believe that God raised him from the dead, and made him Lord of all. . . . If he be risen from the dead, if he now reigns in power at the right hand of the Almighty, if he received this power, and if he uses it in order to our salvation, can any thing be more absurd than to deny him those honors which are due to him in consequence of his glory, and necessarily flow from the relation we stand in towards him? The danger which some apprehend, in paying this duty to their Redeemer, of robbing God of his peculiar honor, and setting up a new and distinct object of worship, in opposition to those plain commands which confine our religious service to God alone, will vanish away, if we consider that all powers exercised by Christ, all

honors paid to him, are ultimately referred to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The honor and worship paid to the Son must either be part of the service we owe to God, or it must be inconsistent with it. If we have found out a new object of adoration for ourselves, we are offenders against the law, which says, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve;" but if we honor Christ in consequence of the power and glory conferred on him by God, and in virtue of a command received from God to honor the Son even as we honor the Father, then the honor we pay to Christ is part of the service we owe to God, and arises even out of that command, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." . . . Hence it is manifest that the honor paid to Christ is ultimately referred to God the Father; for, the honor paid to Christ being founded in the power and glory to which he is exalted, the honor paid must naturally follow the power and glory to which it relates, and, at the last, terminate in the Fountain and Origin of that power and glory, even God the Father. — BISHOP SHERLOCK: *Discourses*, vol. iv. pp. 63–8.

In books the object of which is to prove the Deity of Christ, it is usual to assert that worship should be paid only to Almighty God; and then to infer, from the New-Testament instances of reverence and gratitude exhibited towards our Lord, or commanded to be exhibited to him, that he is essentially divine in his nature and his attributes. But a falsity is contained in the premises from which the conclusion is drawn; for, unless the worship be such as to imply the profoundest emotions of the heart and soul, it is not entitled to be called divine, and the being to whom the prayers and thanksgivings are presented is not necessarily God. There are, unquestionably, various degrees and qualities of worship, which, if not disproportioned to the object revered, are far from being worthy of blame. This feeling, with its expression, is involved in all the gratitude and veneration manifested by one person towards another, — by the child towards its parents; by the pupil towards his teacher; by the dependant towards his superior; by men in general towards the eminently great and good of all ages, who have lived and labored and died for the welfare of their country or of their race. And this deep love, this reverential regard of the human heart for those who have conferred happiness and blessings, unless it shuts out God from the inmost recesses of the soul, has ever been thought to bring into play some of the best instincts and affections of our nature. If, then, as children, it is our sacred duty to honor our father and mother; if, as subjects and servants, we should reverence and obey such as have authority over us; if, as pupils in the school of letters or of life, we are to feel gratitude to those who have guided our steps, trained our minds, or taught us lessons of rectitude and love; if, as dependants in a world of order and subordination,

and needful of the assistance of others, we may justly ask and use their aid; if, as inheritors of the intellectual and moral wealth bequeathed to us by patriots, poets, prophets, and philanthropists, we may cherish their memories, celebrate their anniversaries, and raise to their names the song of thanksgiving and joy, — without encroaching on the supreme and unrivalled honors due to Him from whom every good and perfect gift proceeds, — surely the sacred writers might enjoin the practice, or set the example, of obeying, honoring, and blessing that holy one whom God sent to be the Saviour of the world; whom "God anointed with the oil of gladness," of inspiration and power, "above his fellows;" and whom, for his perfect obedience to the divine will, God raised to a glory far beyond that of other benefactors, — surely they might require and perform all this, without meaning to assign to him that worship and adoration which is due, in the highest sense, to his Father and his God.

The question, then, is not whether the first disciples and others paid honor and reverence to Jesus Christ, and whether he and his apostles enjoined worship to be offered to him; but, rather, whether this was meant to express divine, supreme adoration; whether it was presented, and was required to be presented, to him as the Messiah and Mediator, "through whom God was reconciling the world to himself," or, on the contrary, as the original Source and Author of the blessings of the gospel. Now, we have the strongest grounds for believing that the worship spoken of by the writers of the New Testament, in reference to their Lord and Master, was not of a primary, but of an inferior, kind; that those who knew not the nature of his mission, but who felt respect for his character, and gratitude for his acts of benevolence, designed merely to pay him civil homage, — the worship usually manifested in the East to men of superior power and rank; and that the apostles, who had heard the behest of Jesus to honor him as the Son and Messenger of God, never once bent the knee to him, — never once, even in the unmeasured language of overflowing hearts, offered him a petition or a thanksgiving, — never once, either by implication or command, required for him the praises of the lip, the gratitude of the soul, or the obedience of the life, — in any sense which would attribute to him the honors of Divinity, or imply that he was greater than he always represented himself to be; namely, the Agent, the chosen Servant, the great Prophet, the moral Image, and the beloved Child, of God.

So marked is the difference in the nature of the worship recorded in the New Testament to have been paid to Almighty God, and to his best-beloved Son, and so frequently are the prayers and thanksgivings of the apostles directed to the God and Father of Christ, and so seldom to Christ himself, — him who, with blended lowliness and reverence, commanded religious service to be presented only to the Father, and never prayed to any other being or person, — that, notwithstanding their belief in the essential Deity of Christ, some of the orthodox have been forced to acknowledge that to the Father alone should primary adoration be given; and that their own practice, and that of the churches to which they belong, is usually in accordance with the example and injunctions of Jesus and his apostles.

These acknowledgments are verified partly by the extracts made in pp. 397–405, and partly by the observations in the present section, which interpret in a Unitarian sense some texts of Scripture which have been regarded as evincing the propriety of addressing our Lord as the object of supreme and unqualified adoration.

In the whole range of religious controversy, there is nothing perhaps of so remarkable a kind as that which has been exhibited in the present chapter. It is virtually a triumphant vindication of Unitarian principles from the pens of honest and learned Trinitarians; for, though more or less tinctured by unscriptural phraseology and thought, it does yet, by its fulness of rational and biblical proof for the inferiority of Christ to the Father, destroy the corner-stone of the foundation on which Trinitarianism is raised. It shows that in whatever light Christ may be regarded, — whether as a pre-existent dweller in heaven, or as a sojourner upon earth, — whether as the son of Mary, or as the Child and Son of God, — whether as the Servant or the Representative of the Almighty, — whether as a Prophet in the form of a slave, or an Exemplar in the image of God; as the meekest and lowliest of divine Messengers, or the greatest and most sublime, — whether as he who was in the bosom of the Father, and had a perfect acquaintance with the Father's character and designs, or as he who was ignorant of the time of certain events, a knowledge of which did not come within the sphere of his mission, — whether as the worker of miracles and the author and bestower of eternal life, or as the petitioner of the Father and the doer of his will, — whether as Jehovah's Christ, or the people's Saviour, — whether as the tried and tempted, who overcame Satan by his disinterestedness and piety, or as the holy and sinless one, who shrank at the thought of equalizing his goodness with that of the infinite Source of all good, — whether as a suffering Messiah, or a moral Redeemer; the rejected of men, or the glorified of God; a crucified man, or a victorious and universal Potentate, the Lord and King of his church, the assessor at God's right hand, and the Judge of the world; — it shows, we say, that in all his existence, teachings, works, trials, sufferings, and state of glory, — in the Nazarean cradle, and in the carpentér's shop; on the Sea of Genesareth, and on the banks of the Jordan; in the streets of Jerusalem, and in the villages of Galilee; at the mount sacred to Samaritan hearts, and in the temple hallowed by Jewish prayers, — he was filled with the life, the power, the inspiration, of the Father; proving that in the Father he lived and moved, and had his being; that on him he leaned for support; that from him he derived strength and consolation; that to him were devoted his earliest and his latest thoughts, — his holy breathings, — his fervent prayers, — his ever-felt gratitude, — his heart and soul, with all their energies, all their promptings of love, reve rence, trust, obedience, and submission.

By the particulars now enumerated, — which, for the sake of brevity and emphasis, we have expressed in our own terms, instead of repeating the

more amplified language of the writers previously quoted, — an attempt has been made to give a fair summary and representation of the principal contents of this chapter. And now we put the question to the mind of the unbiased reader, if acknowledgments of Christ's inferiority to the Father, or statements implicatory of this doctrine, such as these, should not be regarded as having brought to an end all controversy respecting the Deity of our Lord. For if he represents himself, and is represented by the apostles, in his condition, character, and offices, as a being dependent on and in subordination to God, he could not be, what creeds and churches say he was, God himself, or equal to him in power and glory; nor could one portion of his nature, the human, have been metaphysically united to another portion, the divine, consisting of an infinite and eternal Agent distinct from the Father, and called God the Son; since the Scriptures never assert or clearly imply that the human nature of Jesus, or, as we would say, Jesus himself, stood or acted in relation to or in union with any other divine person than the Father.

But, so long as it continues, error will, even after having thrown down its mightiest weapons at the feet of truth, retain some show or attitude of defence; and thus it is that Trinitarianism has been forced to depend on a few passages in Scripture which are thought to attribute to our Lord some of the characteristics or peculiar titles of Deity. But, if the sacred penmen are consistent with themselves in the views they have taken of the nature of Christ, is it not a justifiable and indeed a wise procedure to interpret a few texts which are obscure, doubtful, or figurative, by those which are plain, and by the general tenor of their writings; and, where the precise meaning of a particular passage cannot be obtained either from the language used or from the context, rather to restrain our judgment than have recourse to an explanation, which, though a passage in itself may bear it, is inconsistent with the author's known sentiments, or with the doctrines of Scripture as repeatedly expressed in terms of clear and unambiguous import? (See pp. 222–5.) Unquestionably, this is a very proper course. And accordingly, as will be proved in the remaining volumes of this work, these few texts are interpreted by some of the orthodox in a Unitarian sense, either on the ground that the divine names or titles are applied by the sacred writers, not to Christ, but to the Father; or, if applied to him, that they are used in a sense similar to that recognized by Jesus himself, when, after quoting a passage in one of the Psalms, he says (John x. 35) that *they* are "called *gods* to whom the word of God came."

CHAPTER IX.

THE HOLY SPIRIT NOT A THIRD PERSON IN THE GODHEAD, BUT GOD HIMSELF, OR HIS INFLUENCES, GIFTS, &c.

SECT. I. — DEFICIENCY OF EVIDENCE FOR THE DEITY OF THE HOLY GHOST, AS A THIRD PERSON IN THE GODHEAD.

It has been the method of the wisest and best men, since the date of Christianity, to prefer express Scripture, or certain consequences from Scripture, before merely human and philosophical conjectures. — DR. DANIEL WATERLAND.

IT cannot be proved, out of the whole number of passages in the Old Testament in which the Holy Spirit is mentioned, that this is a person in the Godhead; and it is now the almost universally received opinion of learned commentators, that, in the language of the Jews, the "Holy Spirit" means nothing more than divine inspiration, without any reference to a person. — J. D. MICHAELIS: *Anmerk.* on John xvi. 13–15.

The term "God" is never [in Scripture] expressly attributed to the Holy Spirit, though it is usual to infer it from Acts v. 4, where Peter, who in the third verse had asked Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?" says, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." But, in our opinion, this deduction is not valid; for by the "Holy Spirit" are to be understood the gifts of the Holy Spirit, with which the apostles were furnished, and spoke in the name of God. Persons, therefore, who lie to the apostles speaking by the Holy Spirit of God, are rightly said to lie to the Holy Spirit; as those who despise the apostles are said to despise the Lord, and those who despise the Lord Jesus despise Him that sent him. — PHILIP LIMBORCH: *Theol. Christiana*, lib. ii. cap. 17, § 23.

The proof that divine worship was paid to the Holy Spirit is not so abundant and satisfactory as that adduced to prove that divine worship was rendered to Christ. . . . These [the texts in which the Holy

Spirit is called God, &c.] are sometimes used to prove the Divinity of the Holy Spirit, but are either inferior to the former in evidence, or have no bearing upon the subject. Writers have thought too much of the number of texts, and have collected indiscriminately many which have only an apparent relation to the subject. Especially they have endeavored to search out a multitude of texts in which the Holy Spirit is expressly called God. But the simple appellation "God" is not of itself sufficient to prove the Supreme Divinity of the subject to whom it is given, as Christ himself declared, John x. 34, 35. . . . It is doubtful, in many of these texts in which the predicate "God" is used, whether the Holy Spirit as a person is intended. Many of them, at least, may be explained without necessarily supposing a personal subject. The following texts are often quoted: Acts v. 3, 4. Peter tells Ananias, ver. 3, that Satan had induced him *ψεύσασθαι τὸ πνεῦμα ἅγιον* ["to lie to the Holy Spirit"], and afterwards, ver. 4. *οὐκ ἐψεύσω ἀνθρώποις, ἀλλὰ τῷ θεῷ* ["thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God"]. The same subject who is called the "Holy Spirit" in one place is called "God" in the other. But, from the comparison of other passages, it might be thought that the *πνεῦμα ἅγιον* [Holy Spirit] was here to be understood in the subjective sense, and denoted the Spirit dwelling in the apostles; the higher knowledge and gifts with which they were endowed; their miraculous powers, as in ver. 32; and the passage could accordingly be explained thus: "Your crime is not to be considered as if you had intended to deceive mere men, because you knew that God had endowed us with supernatural knowledge." This explanation is confirmed by the very clear text, 1 Thess. iv. 8, "He who despises us despises not men, but God," *τὸν δόντα τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ τὸ ἅγιον εἰς ἡμᾶς* ["who hath given unto us his Holy Spirit"]. Cf. Exod. xvi., where it is said, ver. 2, that the Israelites rebelled against Moses and Aaron; but Moses tells them, ver. 8, "Your rebellion is not *against us, but against God*, whose messengers we are." Does this prove that Moses and Aaron belonged to the Godhead? . . . Matt. xxviii. 19 cannot, in itself considered, be used as a proof-text, because the mere collocation of the name Holy Spirit with that of the Father and Son does not prove that he possesses divine nature in common with them. . . . The passage, 2 Cor. iii. 17, *ὁ δὲ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι*, has sometimes been translated, "the Spirit is Jehovah himself." But the meaning is, "Christ is the true Spirit of the Old Testament;" *i. e.*, the Old Testament contains essentially the same doctrine which Christ taught, viz., the necessity of the

renewal of the heart, and inward piety. Some have endeavored to prove the Divinity of the Holy Spirit from a comparison of different texts; but, in doing this, they have often resorted to forced and unnatural interpretations. An instance of this may be seen in the comparison of the texts, Isa. vi. 8–10 and Acts xxviii. 26, 27. In the former of these we read, "*Jehovah* said, Go to this people," &c.; but in the latter, πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐλάλησε διὰ Ἡσαΐου, . . . λέγον, κ. τ. λ. ["*the Holy Spirit* spake by Esaias the prophet, . . . saying," &c.] Here the same person who in the former text is called יְהוָה [Jehovah], in the latter is called πνεῦμα ἅγιον [the Holy Spirit]. But πνεῦμα ἅγιον may be used in its more general sense for the Deity, and does not here necessarily designate the person of the Holy Ghost. — G. C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. xl.

We have omitted from this quotation the following remarks of Dr. KNAPP: "But when it is proved, from other texts, that Christ, the apostles, and the early Christians, understood the πνεῦμα ἅγιον [Holy Spirit] to be a personal subject, belonging to the Godhead (as those concerned in this event undoubtedly did), then this text [Acts v. 3, 4] and many of the following may be regarded as satisfactory proof of the Divinity of this Spirit. But when introduced before these texts, by which their meaning is determined, or out of their relation to them, they prove nothing. The sense of the text in Acts, as determined by the preceding texts, is plainly this: 'For you to intend to deceive us, who are apostles, — us, whom you knew to be under the special influence of the Holy Spirit, — is to be considered the same as if you had intended to deceive God; for you knew that he from whom this influence proceeds is regarded by us as God.' The same may be said with respect to the formula of baptism, Matt. xxviii. 19. . . . When his Divinity [that of the Holy Spirit] has been proved by other texts, then this also may be cited; because from the former we learn how the latter must be understood, and was actually understood in the first ages of the church."

That is, as we understand the qualification specified, Assume the truth of the proposition that the Holy Ghost is a third personal distinction in the divine nature, and certain passages of Scripture, which prove nothing of the kind, may be justly thought to afford satisfactory evidence for the doctrine! But, after all, the interpretation of Acts v. 3, 4, which Dr. KNAPP founds on the Trinitarian assumption, does not by any means imply that either Peter or Ananias considered the Holy Spirit to be a person different from the Father; and the reason is perfectly obvious; for the Father, — the "Father of lights," from whom "cometh every good and every perfect gift," — the God who "anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy spirit and with power," imparting to him an unmeasured supply of that spirit, — is himself emphatically a SPIRIT, and claims from all his intelligent offspring that they worship him as true worshippers, "in spirit and in truth." See James i. 17. Acts x. 38. John iii. 34; iv. 23, 24.

In proof of the Deity of the Holy Spirit, as a third person in the Godhead, this learned writer appeals to some half-dozen passages; which, however, as will be seen in future volumes of our work, may be more scripturally explained either of the divine agency personified, or of God himself, without involving the notion of hypostatical distinctions.

In theology, my father [pastor of a Lutheran church at Gersdorf and at Lichtenstein] remained true to the school of the celebrated CRUSIUS, and hence belonged to the orthodox. Still he could tolerate more liberal views; and I remember very well that he once said to a friend, what surprised me though a boy, "We cannot deny that our proofs for the independent Divinity of the Holy Spirit are very weak." — C. T. BRETSCHNEIDER, *in Bibliotheca Sacra for October*, 1852; vol. ix. pp. 660–1.

There is one point, and only one, in which the evidence for the doctrine of the Trinity seems at all defective. In it [2 Cor. xiii. 14] Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost are not called "God" in express terms. — *Orthodox Presbyterian for July*, 1830.

2 Cor. iii. 17 . . . has been adduced [by even so clear-headed a theologian as the elder EDWARDS] as a proof-text to establish the doctrine of the Divinity of the third person in the Holy Trinity, and the equality of each and all in their essence and dignity. But in our view, according to all the rules of enlightened interpretation, the passage has no more to do with the Trinity than with the transmigration of souls. That cardinal article of our faith is totally foreign from the train of reasoning pursued by the apostle; nor could he have introduced it there without doing violence to the laws of thought and association. — *Christian Review for June*, 1837; vol. ii. p. 212.

Other authorities, acknowledging the deficiency of the evidence for the Deity of the Holy Ghost, as a person distinct from the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, have been noticed in preceding pages. Thus, in pp. 337–8, 344–5, 357–8, STUART, BUSHNELL, and SWEETSER, as well as J. D. MICHAELIS, confess that his personality was unknown to the Jews before and at the time of Christ; in pp. 366–8, 371, 374, 401, and 409, ERASMUS and COPPENSTEIN, Bishops TAYLOR and ATTERBURY, Dr. WILLIAM SHERLOCK, WITSIUS, and the Oxford Tractarians, own that such a being is never in the Scriptures called "God;" and in pp. 374, 400–1, 403, POSSEVIN, DURAND, and HUGH DE ST. CHER, Bishop TAYLOR, Dr. THOMAS GOODWIN, Dr. EMMONS, and ministers of churches belonging to the English Congregationalists, that there is no instance, recorded in the Bible, of prayer having been offered up to him.

SECT. II. — THE HOLY SPIRIT EITHER GOD, THE FATHER, OR THE DIVINE POWER, INFLUENCES, OR GIFTS.

The Sovereign Spirit of the world,
. . . . . .
Not content,
By one exertion of creative power,
His goodness to reveal, — through every age,
Through every moment up the tract of time,
His parent-hand, with ever-new increase
Of happiness and virtue, has adorned
The vast harmonious frame; his parent-hand,
From the mute shell-fish gasping on the shore
To men, to angels, to celestial minds,
For ever leads the generations on
To higher scenes of being.

MARK AKENSIDE.

§ 1. GOD, WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF PERSONS.

The term "Holy Spirit" has, in Scripture, various significations. First, it means God himself, who is a spirit that is holy, and who is sometimes characterized as having a soul. Thus, Jer. li. 14. Amos vi. 8, "God hath sworn by *his soul*;" that is, by himself. In this sense is "Holy Spirit" used in Isa. lxiii. 10 ["But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them"]. — PHILIP LIMBORCH: *Theologia Christiana*, lib. vi. cap. 6, § 2.

As we perceive that God possesses, and that too in the highest perfection, those qualities of intelligence and will which constitute a spiritual existence, we justly conclude that he is a Spirit. Hence it follows, that all the attributes which he possesses as a Spirit are connected either with his understanding or his will. And, as he possesses these attributes in the highest perfection, he is the most perfect Spirit. . . . The Hebrew word רוּחַ, which is translated "spirit," signified, properly and originally, "wind," "breath" (and so "speech"), and "life." . . . The Hebrews gave the name רוּחַ to all the invisible powers, whether physical or moral, which they saw in operation in the universe, and consequently to God himself, who is possessed of all conceivable powers, in the highest possible degree. Thus רוּחַ and רוּחַ יְהוָה [Spirit of Jehovah] came to signify (*a*) the *nature* of God

in general; (*b*) his invisible power, as exercised both in the materia. world, in its creation (Gen. i. 2), &c., and in the soul of man, in promoting its moral improvement, in the act of inspiration, and in various other ways: vide 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2. — G. C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. xix.

To our minds, it [the phrase Spirit of God, or Holy Spirit] has a definite meaning. We understand it as the third person of the Holy Trinity. The usage in the Old Testament does not necessarily imply such a knowledge. It is sometimes a term convertible with God. Sometimes it means a divine influence. It is the exerted or manifested power of Jehovah. It is either God himself, or an agency assumed as the medium of the divine operation. There is no positive evidence that the Spirit spoken of in the Old Testament was recognized either as a mode of the divine existence, or as one of a Trinity of persons in the divine essence. It was either a name of God himself, not indicating any peculiarity in his nature, or the expression of the divine energy as it produced results in the material world, or enlightened and directed the human mind. — DR. SETH SWEETSER, *in Bibliotheca Sacra for January*, 1854; vol. xi. p. 99.

§ 2. THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE POWER, INFLUENCE, OR GIFTS OF GOD.

He that will carefully observe the language of the Holy Ghost shall find that this word "Spirit," or "Holy Ghost," is most usually, in the New Testament, taken for the extraordinary gifts of that age. — RICHARD BAXTER: *Unreasonableness of Infidelity; in Practical Works*, vol. xx. p. 7.

For the better understanding of these words [viz. "full of the Holy Ghost," in Luke iv. 1.], it is to be observed, that by the term "Holy Ghost" is to be understood the prophetic gifts wherewithal Christ was filled for the preaching and publishing of the gospel, as the revealing of the will of God, and working miracles. The Jews, by the phrase "Holy Ghost," continually intend prophetic gifts, wherewith men and women were endued; and in this sense is the expression most constantly to be taken in the New Testament, when it speaketh not of the third person in the Trinity itself; as, Luke i. 15, 41, 67. John vii. 39. Acts ii. 4; viii. 18; x. 44; xiii. 52; xix. 2; and in very many other places. To work miracles, to expound difficulties, to heal diseases, to teach divinity, to foretell things to come,

and the like, were not so properly the fruit of the union of the human nature to the Godhead; for even mere men had been enabled to do the same. — Abridged from DR. JOHN LIGHTFOOT: *Harmony of the Four Evangelists; in Works*, vol. iv. pp. 351–3.

"Spirit" signifies wind or breath; and in the Old Testament it stands frequently in that sense. The "Spirit of God," or "wind of God," stands sometimes for a high and strong wind; but more frequently it signifies a secret impression made by God on the mind of a prophet. In the New Testament, this word "Holy Ghost" stands most commonly for that wonderful effusion of those miraculous virtues that was poured out at Pentecost on the apostles; by which their spirits were not only exalted with extraordinary degrees of zeal and courage, of authority and utterance, but they were furnished with the gifts of tongues and of miracles. And, besides that first and great effusion, several Christians received particular talents and inspirations, which are most commonly expressed by the word "Spirit" or *inspiration*. Those inward assistances by which the frame and temper of men's minds are changed and renewed are likewise called "the Spirit," or the "Holy Spirit," or "Holy Ghost." So Christ said to Nicodemus, that, "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and that his "heavenly Father would give the Holy Spirit to every one that asked him." By these it is plain that extraordinary or miraculous inspirations are not meant; for these are not every Christian's portion. — BISHOP BURNET: *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, Art. V. p. 84.

There are many passages in which "the Spirit of God" means gifts or powers communicated to men, and from which we are not warranted to infer that there is a person who is the fountain and distributer of these gifts. So we read often in the Old Testament, "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him," when nothing more is necessarily implied under the expression than that the person spoken of was endowed with an extraordinary degree of skill or might or wisdom. So the promises of the Old Testament, "I will pour out my spirit upon you," were fulfilled under the New Testament by what are there called "the gifts of the Holy Ghost;" in reference to which we read, "that Christians received the Holy Ghost," "that the Holy Ghost was given to them," "that they were filled with the Spirit." Neither the words of the promise, nor the words that relate to the fulfilment of it, suggest the personality of the Spirit. — DR. GEORGE HILL: *Lectures in Divinity*, vol. i. p. 439.

It is agreed, on all sides, that the word "spirit," originally signifying air in motion, and breath, was applied in some more remote significations, and particularly to mind and its affections, to intelligent creatures superior to man, and to any species of powerful influence, the cause of which was imperfectly or not at all known; but more especially to the immediate energy of the Deity; and, in a still more restricted sense, to the Deity himself. It is further admitted, that, in many places, the phrase "spirit of God" and its synonyms are used to denote any especial influence or energy of God, whether exercised in a miraculous manner, or according to the ordinary laws of nature. But an accurate examination will, I conceive, satisfactorily show that, &c. — DR. J. P. SMITH: *Script. Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. ii. p. 446.

רוּחַ קָדֹשׁ ["Holy Spirit"] frequently signifies the divine nature, or God himself; but it also denotes the divine power, as displayed both in the material and spiritual world; also the divine understanding and knowledge, and the communication of it to men. . . . All who oppose the truth of God, or persecute the prophets who teach it, even those who put hindrances in the way of the influence of religion over themselves or others, are said to resist the Holy Spirit, to afflict, to grieve it, &c., Isa. lxiii. 10; Eph. iv. 30; Acts vii. 51. Since, now, the sacred writers, like all others, make use of the figure *prosopopeia*, and personify these divine influences, — speaking of them as the "Holy Spirit," as they often do of the wisdom and other attributes of God, — we should be cautious in the selection of texts from which the personality of the Holy Spirit is to be proved. We should rest content with those which are most clear and explicit; for nothing is gained by collecting a large number. — GEO. C. KNAPP: *Christian Theology*, sect. xxxix. I.

For proof of the personality of the Holy Ghost, as different from that of the Father, Dr. KNAPP rests chiefly on John xiv. 16, 17; xv. 26; and on a few other passages, which represent the Spirit of God as willing, searching, speaking, sending, &c. But those to which he refers in the Gospel of John teach, according to the acknowledgment of our author, that the Spirit was *commissioned by* and *dependent on* the Father and the Son; and therefore, unhappily for the Trinitarian cause, prove too much. The other passages may easily be brought under KNAPP'S own principles of interpretation; that is, the Holy Spirit may either signify God himself, without having any reference to hypostatical distinctions, or, by the figure *prosopopeia*, be spoken of as having personal attributes, without implying a real personal consciousness.

SECT. III. — THE HOLY SPIRIT, IF A PERSON DIFFERENT FROM THE FATHER, INFERIOR TO HIM AND CHRIST.

That heavenly Teacher, sent from God,
Shall your whole soul inspire;
Your minds shall fill with sacred truth,
Your hearts with sacred fire.

SCOTCH PARAPHRASE.

There is an order, by which, of these persons, the Father is the first, the Son the second, and the Holy Ghost the third. Nor is this order arbitrary or external, but internal and necessary, by virtue of a subordination of the second unto the first, and of the third unto the first and second. The Godhead was communicated from the Father to the Son, not from the Son unto the Father. . . . Again, the same Godhead was communicated by the Father and the Son unto the Holy Ghost, not by the Holy Ghost to the Father or the Son. . . . This was also done from all eternity. . . . . The Father is never sent by the Son, because he received not the Godhead from him; but the Father sendeth the Son, because he communicated the Godhead to him. In the same manner, neither the Father nor the Son is ever sent by the Holy Spirit, because neither of them received the divine nature from the Spirit; but both the Father and the Son sendeth the Holy Ghost, because the divine nature, common to both the Father and the Son, was communicated by them both to the Holy Ghost. . . . As the Son is God of God by being of the Father, so the Holy Ghost is God of God by being of the Father and the Son, as receiving that infinite and eternal essence from them both. — BISHOP PEARSON: *Exposition of the Creed*, Art. VIII. pp. 452, 454–5.

The Holy Ghost . . . is not self-originated, but proceedeth from the Father eternally as his original, and is sent by the Son. — BISHOP BULL: *Life by Robert Nelson*, p. 304.

The dogma of the Spirit's eternal procession seems to be quite repugnant to reason, and is certainly nowhere revealed in the Sacred Scriptures: see Dr. ISAAC BARROW, as quoted in p. 319; and COCHLÆUS, MASENIUS, RICHARD HOOKER, Bishop SANDERSON, LE CLERC, and JAMES CARLILE, in pp. 273–4, 331–2, 367, 375. But the supposition of its truth would necessarily imply the inferiority of such a being to the person or persons from whom he derived his existence and perfections, as is proved, in pp. 270–2, 274–6, 322–3, by SCHLEIERMACHER, EMMONS, STUART, D. W. CLARK, and JAMES HUGHES.

Let it be considered, that, however great and glorious, however mighty and powerful, however wise and knowing, however venerable and adorable, this person [the Holy Ghost] is, and however intimate with and united to God the Father, yet that all that he is, and all that he does, is to be referred to Christ, as the Author and Fountain of it. — DR. DANIEL WATERLAND: *Eight Sermons*, pp. 193–4.

It is one benefit or privilege of the person of Christ, when spoken of as distinct from the Father, to have the Spirit of God under him, to be at his disposal, and to be his Messenger; which is infinitely too much for any creature. John xv. 26; xvi. 7, 13, 14; and Acts ii. 33. — PRESIDENT EDWARDS: *Works*, vol. iii. p. 535.

The Spirit, who revealed the gospel to the apostles, and enabled them to confirm it by miracles, received the whole from Christ. He, therefore, is the light of the world; and the Spirit, who inspired the apostles, shone on them with a light borrowed from him. So Christ himself hath told us, John xvi. 13–15. — DR. JAMES MACKNIGHT: *Translation of the Apostolical Epistles*, Essay 1.

As Christ glorifies the Father, so the Spirit glorifies Christ: he is the vicegerent and deputy of Christ, as Christ of the Father. He glorifies, not himself, but Christ, and, in Christ, God. — ROBERT HALL: *Notes of Sermons; in Works*, vol. iv. p. 568.

The inferiority of the Holy Ghost to the Father, or to the Father and the Son, is also acknowledged by Dr. ISAAC BARROW, Archbishop TILLOTSON, Bishop FOWLER, WITSIUS, LIMBORCH, and HOLDEN, as already quoted in pp. 266, 280, 393–5. To these authorities it would be easy to add a host of others.

Those passages, however, which speak of the Holy Spirit as a person distinct from and inferior to the Father and the Son, are better explained on the supposition that the power of God, which was communicated to Christ, and which he promised as a Comforter or Teacher to the apostles, was, according to a figure of speech common in all languages, personified. This interpretation is borne out by the fact, that, in the Acts of the Apostles, where the promise is mentioned as having been fulfilled, this Holy Spirit is usually spoken of in terms which are more applicable to a thing than to a being. See BAXTER, LIGHTFOOT, BURNET, and HILL, as quoted in pages 482–3.

INDEXES.

I.—TEXTS QUOTED OR REFERRED TO.

GENESIS.	Page.
i.	228
i. 2	482
i. 3	348
vi. 6	350
viii. 21	350
xii. 7	414
xvii. 1	414
xviii. 1	414
xviii. 2	470
xix. 1	470
xxii. 2, 12, 16	420
xxiii. 7, 12	470
xxvi. 2, 24	414
xxvi. 3	350
xxxix. 2	350
xlviii. 3	414
xlviii. 15, 16	414

EXODUS.	
iii. 2, 4–6, 14	415
vi. 3	414
vii. 1	425
xvi. 2, 8	478
xviii. 7	470
xix. 17	350
xx. 3	389
xxii. 28	425
xxxii. 4, 8	178

LEVITICUS.	
xvi 2	414
xxvi. 46	350

DEUTERONOMY.	
iv. 35	388, 389
iv. 35, 39	390
v. 5	350
vi. 4	22, 262, 286, 311, 334, 337, 389, 390, 391
viii. 3	349
xviii. 15–19	360
xx. 1	350
xxxii. 39	389, 390

JUDGES.	
ii. 1	416

I. SAMUEL.	
x. 10	488
xvi., xvii., xxiv., xxvi.	192

II. SAMUEL.	
ix. 6	470
xiv. 33	470
xxiii. 1, 2	482

I. KINGS.	
xii. 22	349
xviii. 7	470

II. KINGS.	
x. 15	40–1
xix. 35	416

I. CHRONICLES.	
xvii. 3	349

II. CHRONICLES.	
i. 7	414
xi. 20	192
xiii. 2	192
xvi. 3	349

EZRA.	
ii. 45–54	206

ESTHER.	
iii. 2, 5, &c.	470

JOB. Page.
iii. 193
xlii. 7, 8 193
xlii. 9 350

PSALMS.
ii. 4 350
ii. 7 420
xviii. 31 389
xix. 7, 8 237
xxii. 20 420
xxxiii. 6 348
xxxv. 17 420
xxxvi. 9 8
xlv. 1 8
xlv. 6 . . . . . 425, 426, 430
xlv. 7 466
li. 11 337
lxxxii. 6 425
lxxxvi. 10 390
xc. 2 284
xcvii. 7 471
xcvii. 9 425
cvii. 20 349
cx. 7 465
cxix. 50, 89 349
cxlvii. 15, 18 349

ISAIAH.
vi. 8–10 479
vii. 14 426
ix. 6 427
xxvi. 4 346
xl. 8 349
xl. 25 385
xliv. 4 174
xliv. 24 284
xliv. 6, 8 . . . . . 388, 389, 390
xlv. 5, 6, 18, 21, 22 . . . 389, 390
xlviii. 12 388
lv. 11 349
lxiii. 10 . . . . . 481, 484
lxv. 5 73

JEREMIAH.
i. 18 178
vi. 26 420
vii. 4 85
xxvii. 1 349
xxxi. 3 414
xxxiv. 8 349
xxxvi. 1 349
li. 14 481

EZEKIEL.
i. 336

DANIEL.
ii. 46 470
iv. 35 . . . . . 388, 389

JOEL. Page
ii. 28, 29 483

AMOS.
vi. 8 481
viii. 10 420

HABBAKUK.
i. 2, 3 193

ZECHARIAH.
xii. 10 420

MALACHI.
ii. 10 286

MATTHEW.
i. 20 420
i. 23 . . . . . 426, 458
ii. 2, 8, 11 470
ii. 15–18 189
iv. 1–11 . . . . . 450, 451, 452, 453
iv. 4 . . . . . 349, 452
iv. 10 . . . . . 389, 473
v. 18, 20, 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44 . 441
vi. 9 . . . . . 323, 399
vii. 1 116
vii. 29 440
viii. 2 470
viii. 2, 6 442
viii. 3 441
ix. 2 441
ix. 2, 6 464
ix. 18 470
xi. 25 399
xi. 27 . . . . . 422, 468
xii. 6, 8 464
xii. 9–12 170
xii. 50 26
xiii. 11 248
xiii. 41 465
xiii. 54 434
xv. 22 442
xv. 25 470
xvi. 13–16 469
xvi. 14, 16, 22 352
xvi. 16 . . . . . 243, 419
xvi. 27 . . . . . 464, 465, 467
xvii. 1 190
xvii. 5 . . . . . 420, 421
xviii. 26 470
xix. 17 411
xx. 20 470
xx. 23 422
xxi. 25 417
xxii. 30–32 189
xxii. 31, 32 416
xxiii. 9 179
xxiii. 16–33 170
xxiv. 23, 26 178

MATT. (*continued*). Page.

xxiv. 30 465
xxv. 31 465
xxv. 40 98
xxvi. 36–44 448
xxvi. 37–39 455
xxvi. 39, 42 456
xxvi. 63, 64 419
xxvii. 40 43 419
xxvii. 44 190
xxvii. 46 448
xxvii. 62 443
xxviii. 9, 17 470
xxviii. 18 . . . . . 422, 465, 468
xxviii. 18–20 466
xxviii. 19 . . . . . 10, 232, 301, 357 367–8, 478, 479

MARK.

i. 41 441
ii. 5 441
iv. 39 441
v. 6, 22 470
vi. 3 442
ix. 38 . . . . . 64, 99, 124
x. 18 411
xii. 29 . . . . 22, 262, 286, 311, 391
xii. 32–34 286
xiii. 21 178
xiii. 32 . . . . . 219, 422
xiv. 32–39 448
xiv. 33, 34 455
xiv. 50 353
xiv. 61, 62 419
xv. 19 470
xv. 32 419
xv. 34 448

LUKE.

i. 1–3 188
i. 15, 41, 67 482
i. 32, *seq.* 419
i. 35 . . . . . 420, 421
i. 36, 40 435
ii. 46 436
ii. 52 434
iii. 38 421
iv. 1 482
iv. 4 349
iv. 8 473
iv. 18 436
v. 41 419
v. 12 470
v. 13, 20 441
vi. 12 448
vi. 26 150
vii. 16 469
ix. 28 190
x. 21 399
xi. 2 . . . . . 323, 399

LUKE (*continued*). Page.

xi. 13 483
xii. 32 149
xii. 50 455
xiv. 1–6 170
xvii. 15–19 27
xvii. 19 28
xvii. 21, 23 178
xviii. 19 411
xxii. 32, 41–45 448
xxii. 42 454
xxii. 43 219
xxii. 44 455
xxiii. 34, 46 448
xxiii. 39 190
xxiv. 11, 25 354

JOHN.

i. 1 . 219, 338, 427, 428, 444, 467–8
i. 1, 3 . . . . . 413, 425
i. 1–14 . . . 228, 345, 357–8, 413
i. 6 417
i. 14 . 106, 420, 421, 422, 431, 444, 461
i. 14, 18 273
i. 18 . . . . 219, 278, 364, 432, 449
i. 49 419
iii. 2 469
iii. 3, 5 483
iii. 5–16 222
iii. 13 417
iii. 16 . . . . 206, 266, 422, 443
iii. 34 . . . . . 198, 440, 479
iii. 35 . . . . . 420, 421, 468
iv. 11 443
iv. 23 404
iv. 23, 24 479
iv. 34 446
iv. 42 245
v. 7 443
v. 19 . . . . . 410, 447, 462
v. 19, 20, 30 266
v. 19, 26, 27 422
v. 19, 30 . . . . . 408, 448
v. 22, 23 471
v. 22, 25, 27 467
v. 22, 26, 27 468
v. 22, 27 465
v. 23 . . . . . 472, 474
v. 25, 27 419
v. 27 464
v. 37 415
vi. 38–40, 57 422
vi. 38, 41, 42, 45, 46, 50, 51, 58 . 417
vi. 40 94
vi. 57 266
vi. 60, *seq.* 222
vi. 63 262
vi. 69 243
vii. 15 434
vii. 16 440

JOHN (*continued*). Page.

vii. 17 251
vii. 39 482
viii. 28 . . . . . 447, 448
viii. 42 417
viii. 51–57 222
viii. 54 422
ix. 38 470
x. 18 422
x. 30 . . . . . 10, 446, 450, 461
x. 31 420
x. 34, 35 . . . . . 425, 478
x. 35 476
x. 36 . . . . . 117, 421
x. 38 . . . . . 420, 422, 438
xi. 25-27 243
xi. 25, 26, 43 441
xi. 27 245
xi. 41 422
xi. 41, 42 448
xii. 21 442
xii. 27 455
xii. 49, 50 . . . . . 422, 439
xiii. 3 . . . . . 464–5, 468
xiii. 18 189
xiii. 35 . . . . . 25, 55, 66
xiv. 9 434
xiv. 9, 10 352–3
xiv. 10 . . . 420, 421, 422, 439, 447
xiv. 16, 17 484
xiv. 28 . 266, 270, 410, 411, 422, 445
xv. 15 364
xv. 16 399
xv. 26 . . . . . 273, 484, 486
xvi. 7, 13, 14 486
xvi. 12 364
xvi. 12, 13 . . . . . 354, 362
xvi. 12–14 363
xvi. 13–15 . . . . 251, 477, 486
xvi. 23, 26 404
xvi. 28 417
xvii. 1–4, 6 422
xvii. 2 468
xvii. 3 . 22, 245, 323, 372, 389, 390, 409, 428, 433
xvii. 5 466
xvii. 18 . . . . . 417, 440
xvii. 21 51
xvii. (whole chapter) . . 448, 456
xx. 2, 15 442
xx. 13 124
xx. 17 266
xx. 28 . . . . . 352–3, 428, 429
xx. 31 243
xxi. 15 31

ACTS.

M. 357
ii. 4 . . . . . 482, 483
ii. 17, 18, 38 483

ACTS (*continued*). Page.

ii. 22 . . . . . 360, 455
ii. 22–36 244
ii. 31–36 467
ii. 33 486
ii. 33–36 466
ii. 33, 41 358
ii. 36 464
iii. 13–26 244
iii. 22 360
iv. 4 358
iv. 8, 31 483
v. 3, 4 479
v. 3, 4, 32 478
v. 4 477
v. 32 483
vi. 3, 5 483
vii. 30 415–16
vii. 51 484
vii. 55 483
viii. 12 244
viii. 17, 18 . . . . . 482, 483
viii. 37 246
ix. 17 483
ix. 20 244
x. 190
x. 25 470
x. 35 79
x. 38 . . . . 261, 440, 449, 479
x. 42 467
x. 44–47 . . . . . 482, 483
xi. 28, 24 97
xi. 24 483
xi. 26 122
xiii. 9, 52 483
xiii. 28–30 244
xiii. 38 455
xiii. 52 482
xv. 8 483
xvi. 30 442
xvi. 31 . . . . . 244, 245
xvi. 31–34 246
xvi. 32, 33 358
xvii. 16–32 361
xvii. 18–20 244
xvii. 31 . . . 429, 455, 465, 467
xviii. 17 125
xix. 2 . . . . . 482, 483
xx. 27 365
xx. 28 429
xxiii. 3 197
xxiv. 14 123
xxvi. 28 122
xxviii. 26, 27 479

ROMANS.

i. 13 198
i. 17 245
ii. 16 467
iii. 30 286

ROMANS (*continued*). Page.

v. 5 488
viii. 26 399
viii. 29, 32 . . . . . 420, 421
viii. 31, 32 266
ix. 5 . . 219, 357–8, 425, 429, 430
x. 6–8 230
x. 8, 9 . . . . . 243, 472
xii. 18 49
xiv. 75
xiv. 1 . . . . . 51, 80
xiv. 9 . . . . . 455, 465, 466
xiv. 10, 13 50

I. CORINTHIANS.

i. 13 145
i. 30 315
ii. 2 243
ii. 8 466
iv. 1 248
iv. 6 243
vii. 19 70
viii. 4 . . . . . 388, 389
viii. 4-6 . . . . . 286, 390
viii. 5 425
viii. 6 . . . . . 262, 396, 413
xi. 4–10 189
xiii. 5, 7 87
xiv. 2, 4, 11 325
xv. 1–4 243
xv. 24–28 423
xv. 27 . . . . . 411, 429
xv. 28 307
xv. 51 248
xvi. 22 75

II. CORINTHIANS.

i. 22 483
iii. 7 189
iii. 17 . . . . . 478, 480
iv. 6 458
v. 4 175
v. 5 483
v. 10 328
v. 19 . . . . . 398, 426, 474
v. 21 451
xi. 31 411
xiii. 14 . . . . . 315, 316, 480

GALATIANS.

ii. 11–13 194
ii. 13, 14 197
iii. 20 286
iv. 4 266
v. 19, 20 72
vi. 7 104

EPHESIANS.

i. 3 . . . . . 399, 404
i. 6 426

EPHESIANS (*continued*). Page.

i. 9, 10 248–9
i. 11 388
i. 17 . . . . . 396, 404
i. 17–23 466
i. 20 467
i. 20–22 465
i. 20, *seq.* 466
ii. 13, 18, 19 426
ii. 18 . . . . . 404, 463
iii. 3, 6, *seq.* 249
iii. 14 . . . . . 399, 404
iv. 2 45
iv. 6 286
iv. 30 484
v. 5 433
vi. 19 249
vi. 24 . . . . . 66, 88

PHILIPPIANS.

ii. 3–8 29
ii. 5–11 468
ii. 6 80
ii. 6, 7 439
ii. 8 444–5
ii. 8–11 465
ii. 9 . . . . . 429, 467
ii. 9, 10 466
ii. 9–11 471
ii. 10 444
ii. 11 . . . . . 408, 471
iv. 1 426

COLOSSIANS.

i. 12 404
i. 13 . . . . . 420, 421
i. 15 . . . 419, 420, 422, 428, 462–3
i. 16, 17 413
i. 17 466
i. 26, 27 249
ii. 8 242
ii. 9 . . . . . 431, 461

I. THESSALONIANS.

i. 2 396
iii. 11 401
iv. 8 . . . . . 478, 483
v. 21 135

I. TIMOTHY.

i. 5 242
i. 10, 18 241
i. 17 . . . . . 286, 396
ii. 5 . . 286, 323, 398, 445, 455, 467
iii. 9 248
iii. 16 . 218, 219, 247 374, 430, 445 458, 462, 467
v. 21 433
v. 23 . . . . . 188, 193
vi. 3 241

I. TIM. (*continued*). Page.

vi. 4 . . . . . 74, 242
vi. 18 433
vi. 20 242

II. TIMOTHY.

i. 13 242
ii. 19 123
ii. 23 242
iii. 16 193
iv. 8 241
iv. 13 . . . . . 188, 193

TITUS.

i. 9, 13 241
ii. 1, 2, 8 241
ii. 13 . . . . . 411, 425, 431
iii. 10 75

HEBREWS.

i. 1, 2 . . . . . 235, 417
i. 2, 3 418
i. 3 . . 333, 362, 422, 434, 458, 460
i. 5 . . . . . 420, 421
i. 6 471
i. 6, 9 466
i. 8, 9 425
i. 9 . . . . . 266, 474
ii. 4 483
ii. 7, 8 464
ii. 9, 10, 14–17 467
ii. 10 468
iii. 4 . . . . . 425, 431
iv. 12 349
iv. 15 451
v. 8 . . . . . 434, 451
v. 5–9 422
v. 9 245
v.–ix. 189
x. 7, 9 309
xi. 1 71
xi. 3 349
xi. 6 244
xii. 2 . . . . . 232, 467
xiii. 9 242

JAMES.

i. 17 . . . . . 417, 479
ii. 19, *seq.* 286, 390
iii. 15–17 417

I. PETER. Page

i. 3 . . . . . 399, 404, 411
i. 19 451
i. 23 349
ii. 22 198
iii. 22 466
iv. 16 122

II. PETER.

i. 1 431
i. 1, 2 433
ii. 1 72
iii. 5 349
iii. 16 228

I. JOHN.

ii. 22 433
iii. 3, 5 451
iii. 8 106
iii. 24 483
iv. 2 419
iv. 9, 10 266
iv. 10 443
iv. 13 483
iv. 16 75
v. 1, 5 419
v. 7 . . 10, 11, 219, 220, 367–8, 371
v. 12 94
v. 20 . . . . 398, 425, 428, 432

II. JOHN.

10, 11 75

JUDE.

3 242
3, 19, 23 75
4 . . . . . 219, 433
20 399

REVELATION.

i. 8 433
iii. 12 417
iii. 21 468
iv. 11 472
v. 9 471
v. 9, 10, 12 472
v. 12, 13 406
v. 13 400
xi. 17 23

II. — EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS REFERRED TO.

Arius . . . . . pp. 62, 86
Athanasius 4, 62, 251, 253, 269, 273, 359
Augustine 87, 152, 252, 326, 329
Barnabas 195
Beda or Bede 31
Boëthius 280
Chrysostom 359, 360
Celestius 105
Cyril of Alexandria 312
Gregory Nazianzen 234
Gregory Nyssen 287, 288, 312
Hilary 312
Ignatius 195
Irenæus 261
Jerome 331, 440
John Philoponus 312
Justin Martyr 342
Origen 261, 359
Pelagius 105
Polycarp 195
Rufinus 261
Sabellius 4, 304–5, 306
Tertullian 261, 326
Theophilus of Antioch 332

III. — TRINITARIANS QUOTED OR REFERRED TO.*

The letter (*r.*) denotes that the authors in the pages indicated are not quoted, but referred to.

A.

Abbott, Jacob 64, 142, 144, 155, 159, 233, 448, 452, 468
Adam, Robert, B.A. 102
Akenside, Mark . . . . . 481 (motto)
Allix, Peter, D.D. . . . . 343 (*r.*), 344 (*r.*)
Anselm, Archbishop 312
Arminius, James 279
Arnold, Thomas, D.D. . 50, 61, 75, 82, 118, 150, 168, 175, 187 (*r.*), 192, 204 255, 261, 313, 328, 363, 460.
Ascusnage 312
Ashwell, George 87
Atterbury, Bishop 363
Aubrey, John, Esq. . . . . 88 (*r.*)

B.

Bacon, Lord . 89 (*r.*), 131 (motto), 132, 142 (*r.*), 149, 153, 180, 208 (*r.*) 318, 319, 336 (motto).
Bailey, Philip James, Esq. . . . . 25, 125, 143, 250. (Mottoes.)
Balmer, Robert, D.D. . . . . 45, 47 (*r.*), 54 (*r.*), 65, 82, 134
Barnes, Albert 249
Barrow, Isaac, D.D., F.R.S. . . . 230, 260, 280, 289, 312, 314, 319
Barrows, E. P., M.A. 445
Basnage, James 335
Bathurst, Bishop 113
Baxter, Richard . 35, 48, 49 (*r.*), 55, 56, 67, 73, 77, 80, 126, 131 (motto), 133, 139, 143, 155, 158, 162, 172, 177, 200, 206, 231 243 (motto), 250, 312, 314, 482.
Beattie, James, LL.D. 236
Beausobre, Isaac de . . . . . 347 (*r.*), 470
Beecher, Edward, D.D. 105, 128, 153, 164, 170, 216
Bellarmine, Cardinal . . . . . 334, 376 (*r.*)
Bengel, John Albert . . . . . 218 (*r.*)
Bennet, Bishop 111

* We intend to give, at the close of our last volume, a complete list of the books quoted, and the editions used; with some particulars respecting the authors.

Bennet, Thomas, D.D. 362
Bentley, Richard, D.D. . . . . 185 (motto)
Beveridge, Bishop 314, 320, 339, 367
Beza, Theodore . . . . . 193 (*r.*), 433 (*r.*)
Bibliotheca Sacra, Writers in the 161
Bingham, Joseph 312
Blayney, Benjamin, D.D. 185
Blomfield, Bishop 343
Bloomfield, Samuel Thomas, D.D., F.S.A. . . 215 (*r.*), 411, 429, 432
Bond, T. E., jun. 31, 136
Boothroyd, Benjamin, LL.D. . . . . 193 (*r.*), 420
Brentius, or Brentzen, John 438
Bretschneider, C. T., Father of . . . . . 480 (*r.*)
Brewster, Sir David . . . . . 119 (*r.*)
Brougham, Lord . . . . . 119, 120 (*r.*)
Browne, Sir Thomas . . . . . 320, 331 (motto)
Browne, John, M.A. 340
Bull, Bishop . 4 (*r.*), 91 (*r.*), 270 (*r.*), 286 (*r.*), 288 (*r.*), 312, 314 (*r.*), 394 395–6 (*r.*), 411 (*r.*), 485.
Bunsen, Chevalier . . . . . 324 (motto)
Burgess, Bishop 186
Burke, Edmund . . . . . 94 (*r.*)
Burnet, Bishop . . . 91, 101, 180, 200, 251 (*r.*), 335, 374 (motto), 378 385 (*r.*), 469, 483.
Burton, Edward, D.D. 254, 342, 346
Bushnell, Horace, D.D. . 85, 184, 242, 262, 293, 301, 307, 310 (*r.*), 313, 314 337, 379, 382, 412 (*r.*), 457 (*r.*), 463.
Butler, Bishop . . . . . 95 (*r.*)
Butler, Charles, Esq. 116, 156
Butler, Samuel . . . . . 67 (motto)
Byrth, Thomas, D.D., F.S.A. 103

C.

Calixt, or Calixtus, George . . . . . 336 (*r.*), 340 (*r.*)
Calmet, Augustin . . . . . 360 (*r.*), 425
Calvin, John . 39 (*r.*), 62 (*r.*), 131 (*r.*), 145 (*r.*), 182 (*r.*), 193 (*r.*), 213 251 (*r.*), 267, 278, 300, 301, 302, 312, 314 (*r.*), 331 397, 398 (*r.*).
Campbell, George, D.D. . 27, 28 (*r.*), 57, 68, 74, 146, 154, 178, 187 (*r.*), 237, 245, 248, 327, 339, 443, 470.
Campbell, Lord 119–20
Canus, or Cano, Melchior 366
Capellus, or Capel, Lewis . . . . . 347 (*r.*)
Carlile, James 274, 371, 381, 398, 445
Chace, George I., LL.D. 130, 171
Chalmers, Alexander, F.S.A., Esq. 89

Chalmers, Thomas, D.D., LL.D. . 30, 47 (*r.*), 71, 81, 89, 114, 141, 147, 159 362 (motto), 371, 373, 452, 459.
Chillingworth, "the immortal" . . . . . 88 (*r.*)
Christian Observer, Writers in the 206, 211
Christian Psalmist . . . . . 438 (motto)
Christian Review, Writers in the 98, 99, 480
Church Review, Writers in the 130, 176
Clarendon, Lord 88
Clark, D. W., D.D. 276, 311
Clarke, Adam, LL.D., F.S.A. 174, 182, 421, 433, 439
Clerc, John Le . . . 68, 108, 120 (*r.*), 140, 153, 156, 267, 314, 321, 332 347 (*r.*), 385 (*r.*).
Cochlæus, John 331
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor . 74, 81, 92 (*r.*), 108 (motto), 116, 149, 162, 187 (*r.*) 191, 198 (*r.*), 203, 208, 224, 234, 240, 261, 270 282 (*r.*), 287, 295, 296 (*r.*), 314, 317, 320 (*r.*) 324, 343, 360, 382 (*r.*).
Comings, Prebendary 28
Congregational Magazine, Writers in the 402–5
Conybeare, John Josias 237
Conybeare, W. D., M.A., F.R.S. . . . . 394 (*r.*)
Coppenstein, John Andrew 374
Cowper, William . . . . . 217, 239. (Mottoes.)
Cox, Francis Augustus, D.D., LL.D. 63, 134
Crabbe, George, LL.B. . . . . 76 (motto)
Crusius . . . . . 480 (*r.*)
Cudworth, Ralph, D.D. . . 84, 231, 251, 264, 281, 312, 384, 395 (*r.*)

D.

Daneau, Lambert 331
Daubuz, Charles, M.A. 471
Davenant, Sir William . . . . . 257 (motto)
Davidson, Samuel, D.D., LL.D. . . 179, 217, 218, 219, 333, 430, 454
Dawson, Benjamin, LL.D. 286, 398, 414, 418, 451
De Quincey, Thomas . . . . . 92, 197, 213 (motto)
Diodati, John . . . . . 193 (*r.*)
Doddridge, Philip, D.D. . . . . 92, 109 (*r.*), 313, 335, 385
Döderlein, John Christopher, D.D. . . . . 335, 347 (*r.*)
Donne, John, D.D. 234
Dorner, J. A., D.D. 345
Dryden, John . . . . . 377 (motto)
Dublin Review, Writer in the 376
Durand, William 400
Durell, David, D.D. . . . . 187 (*r.*)
Dwight, Timothy, S.T.D., LL.D. 313, 327, 387, 447

E.

Eccius or Eck, John 374
Eclectic Review, Writers in the . . . . . 98, 100, 185 (motto)
Edwards, Bela Bates 31, 38, 136, 241
Edwards, John, D.D. 356
Edwards, Jonathan . . . . . 443, 480 (r.), 486
Emmons, Nathanael, D.D. . 272, 291, 293–4 (r.), 313, 314, 400, 401, 448
Erasmus, Desiderius . . . . . 235, 333 (r.), 360 (r.), 366, 426
Ernesti, John Augustus, D.D. 219, 221
Erskine, Thomas, Esq. 323
Ess, Leander Van . . . . . 80 (r.)
Evelyn, John, Esq., F.R.S. 312, 351, 377

F.

Faber . . . . . 317 (r.)
Field, Richard, D.D. . . . . 374 (motto)
Flatt, John Frederick 353, 390, 426
Fowler, Bishop 312, 395
French, a Catholic Barrister 117

G.

Galatin, Peter . . . . . 334 (r.)
Gasparin, Count Agénor de . . . . 199, 205–6 (r.), 210 (r.), 215
Gastrell, Bishop 312
Gaussen, L. . . . . 198 (r.)
Gell, Robert, D.D. 431
Genebrard, Gilbert 312
Gerard, Gilbert, D.D. . . . . 219, 220, 223 (r.), 225
Gibson, Bishop 109
Goodwin, Thomas, D.D. 334, 401
Gordonius Hunlæius, or James Gordon . . . . . 376 (r.)
Gretser, James 376
Griesbach, John James, D.D. . 185, 187, 215, 218, 433. (Referred to.)
Grotius, Hugo . . . 120 (r.), 314 (r.), 347 (r.), 385 (r.), 425 (r.), 426
Guenther 336
Gurney, Joseph John 433
Guthrie, Dr. 98

H.

Hackspan, Theodore 377
Hagenbach, Karl (Charles) Rudolph, D.D. 232
Hale, Sir Matthew . . . . . 76, 100, 119 (r.), 234
Hales, "the ever-memorable" . . . . . 88 (r.)

Hall, Bishop 89
Hall, Robert, M.A. . 42, 50, 61, 70, 80, 94, 128, 134, 146, 156, 158, 173, 181 237, 314, 328, 378, 387, 436, 443, 486.
Hampden, Bishop, D.D. 118, 150, 225, 329, 365, 370
Hare, Bishop 67, 91
Hare, Julius Charles, M.A. 135, 169, 175, 215, 355
Haven, Joseph, jun. 295, 300, 313, 373, 391, 413, 425
Hawkins, William, M.A. 353, 399
Herbert, George . . . . . 227 (motto)
Hewlett, John, B.D. 417
Hey, John, D.D. . . . . 110, 217, 322, 333 (*r.*), 381
Hieronymus à Hyacintho 374
Hill, George, D.D., F.R.S.E. 413, 483
Hinds, Bishop 194, 204, 210
Hoffman, Andrew Theophilus (Andreas Gottlieb), D.D. . . . 342
Holden, George, M.A. 266
Hooker, Richard, M.A. . . . . 172 (motto), 314 (*r.*), 367, 392
Hopkins, Samuel, D.D. 277, 288, 290, 313
Horne, Thomas Hartwell, B.D. 80, 175, 218, 219, 222, 223, 225, 391, 400, 415
Horsley, Bishop . . . . . 237, 313, 369, 446 (motto)
Hosius, Cardinal 374
Howe, John, A.M. . . . . 283, 284 (*r.*), 286, 309, 312, 385 (*r.*)
Hughes, James 323
Hugh de St. Cher 400
Huntingford, Bishop 313, 396
Hurd, Bishop 321, 439

J.

James, John Angell 32, 46, 47, 83
Jeffrey, Lord 104
Jenyns, Soame, Esq. 313, 321
Johnson, H. M. 330
Johnson, Samuel, LL.D. 87, 231
Johnstone, John, M.D., F.R.S. . . . . 95 (*r.*), 96 (*r.*)
Jones, William, of Nayland, M.A., F.R.S. . . . . 288 (*r.*), 313
Jones, William, M.A., a Baptist writer 115

K.

Kebb . . . . . 48 (motto)
King, David . . . . . 47 (*r.*)
King, Sir Peter 261
Knapp, George Christian, D.D. . 232, 249, 254, 282, 313, 340, 348, 390, 420 427, 435, 441, 451, 467, 479, 482, 484.
Knox, John . . . . . 196 (*r.*)
Knox, Vicesimus, D.D. 37, 42, 59, 69, 80, 93, 111, 141

L.

Latermann, John, D.D. . . . . 336 (r.)
Laud, Archbishop . . . . . 177 183 (r.)
Laurence, Archbishop 341
Leibnitz, Godfrey William de 312
Leighton, Archbishop, D.D. 53, 384
Lightfoot, John 483
Limborch, Philip 172, 250, 266, 332, 417, 419, 471, 477, 481
Lindsly, Philip 104
Longley, Bishop 354, 361, 418
Lopez, Gregory . . . . . 78 (r.)
Lowth, Bishop . . . . . 99 (r.), 134, 185, 427
Lowth, William, B.D. 470
Lucas, Francis; or, Lucas Brugensis 334
Lücke, Frederick, or Godfrey Charles Frederick, D.D. 423
Luther, Martin . 62 (r.), 131, 145 (r.), 182 (r.), 196 (r.), 205 (r.), 209 (r.) 324, 331.

M.

McAll, Robert Stephens, LL.D. 74, 164
Macknight, James, D.D. 186, 429, 433, 486
Maclaine, Archibald, D.D. 86, 327, 332
Magee, Archbishop . . . . . 95, 97, 102, 112. (Referred to.)
Magoon, E. L. 33, 38, 64, 84, 129, 137, 170, 184, 238, 437, 444
Maltby, Bishop 245, 352, 364, 446
Mangey, Thomas, LL.D., D.D. 339, 352
Manton, Thomas, D.D. 319, 399
Maresius, or De Marets, Samuel . . . . . 411 (r.)
Marsh, Bishop 186
Masenius, James 366, 375
Mason . . . . . 458 (motto)
Maurice, Frederick Denison, M.A. . 107, 205, 255, 337, 410, 411 (r.), 462
Mayer, John, D.D. 427
Mayer, Lewis, D.D. 423
Melancthon, Philip . . . 126, 182 (r.), 280, 288 (r.), 339, 369 (r.)
Methodist Quarterly Review, Writer in the 99
Michaelis, John David . . 193 (r.), 200, 207, 218, 219, 251, 346, 353, 358 428, 477.
Miller, Samuel, D.D. . . . . 313, 351 (motto)
Milman, Henry Hart 86, 240, 246, 313, 453, 454, 460
Milner, John, D.D., F.S.A. 375
Milner, Joseph, B.A. . . . . 193 (r.)
More, Henry, D.D., F.R.S. . . . . 312, 314 (r.), 317 (motto)
Morus, Samuel Frederick Nathaniel, D.D. . . . . 225, 280, 288 (r.)
Mosheim, John Laurence von . . . . . 87, 101, 239, 245, 332 (r.)
Murdock, James, D.D. 260, 261, 263

N.

Neander, Augustus, or John Augustus William, D.D. . 198 (r.), 246, 316 344, 363, 372, 432, 436, 456
Needham . . . . . 419 (motto)
Newcome, Archbishop . . . . . 97 (r.), 187 (r.), 431
New Englander, Writers in the 105, 121, 180
Newton, John . . . . . 31 (r.)
Newman, John Henry, M.A. 369
North British Review, Writers in the 142, 182, 198
Nösselt, John Augustus, D.D. 419, 426
Nye, Philip . . . . . 214 (r.)

O.

Olshausen, Hermann, D.D. . . . . 401, 402 (r.)
Orme, William 49, 63, 186
Orthodox Presbyterian, Writer in the 480
Orton, Job, D.D. 92
Ostervald, John Frederick 239
Owen, John, D.D. 53, 377
Oxford or Anglican Doctors 353, 371
Oxford, Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Colleges belonging to the University of 286

P.

Paley, William, D.D. . . . . 119 (r.), 202, 454
Park, Edwards Amasa, D.D. 136, 256
Parr, Samuel, LL.D. . . 29, 36, 50, 59, 69, 79, 95, 96 (r.), 102, 118, 133 157, 160, 167, 226, 232, 248, 333.
Patrick, Bishop . . . . . 397 (motto)
Pearson, Bishop . 261, 265, 314 (r.), 389, 393, 407 (motto), 409, 411 (r.), 465, 485.
Penn, Granville, Esq. 187, 215, 411, 431
Penn, James, B.A. 181
Petavius, Dionysius; or, Denys Petau 375
Picus, John . . . . . 342 (r.)
Planck, Gottlieb (Theophilus) Jacob, D.D. 217, 220, 223
Pond, Enoch, D.D. 299, 313, 412, 457
Possevin, Anthony 374
Powell, Baden, M.A., F.R.S., F.G.S. . . . 163, 215, 221, 238, 387
Powell, William Samuel, D.D. 154, 155, 201, 410
Prideaux, Humphrey, D.D. 346
Pusey, E. B., D.D. . . . . 174 (r.), 210

R.

Renty, or Renti, Marquis de . . . . . 78 (r.)
Ridgley, Thomas, D.D. 278, 314, 378, 385, 390

Robinson, John 131
Roscelin . . . . . 312 (*r.*)
Rosenmüller, John George, D.D. 429
Rupertus Tuitiensis . . . . . 334 (*r.*)

S.

Salabert, John . . . . . 334 (*r.*)
Salmeron, Alphonso . . . . . 334, 347 (*r.*), 351, 377
Sanderson, Bishop 145, 332
Saurin, James 57, 73, 141, 144, 149, 235, 297
Sawyer, Leicester A. 44, 52, 120, 246
Schlegel, John Rudolph 336
Schleiermacher, Fredk. E. Daniel, D.D. 198 (*r.*), 271, 305, 306 (*r.*), 314 (*r.*)
Schleusner, John Frederick, D.D. 425, 470
Schmitz, Leonhard, Ph. D. 86
Schneckenburger, Matthias, D.D. . . . . 365 (*r.*)
Schott, Henry Augustus, D.D. 336
Scotch Paraphrases, Writers of . . . . . 469, 485. (Mottoes.)
Scultet, Abraham, D.D. 469
Secker, Archbishop 326
Seiler, George Frederick, D.D. 190, 203, 217, 218, 221, 222, 434
Selden, John . . . . . 71, 132, 213 (motto)
Shakspeare, William . . . . 34, 56, 177, 334, 356, 425. (Mottoes.)
Shedd, William G. T. 262, 296, 372, 380
Sherlock, Thomas, Bishop of London 466, 473
Sherlock, William, D.D. . 4 (*r.*), 166, 213, 235, 270 (*r.*), 282, 283, 284 (*r.*) 287 (*r.*), 308, 312, 314, 325, 362, 378, 409, 443
Shore, Sir John . . . . . 90 (*r.*)
Simon, Father . . . . . 345, 346 (*r.*)
Simpson, David, M.A. 58, 79, 93, 207, 252
Smalridge, Bishop 367
Smith, John Pye, D.D. F.R.S. . . 97, 103, 187, 190, 193, 205 (*r.*), 208, 223 313, 342, 343, 347, 355, 359, 396, 400 404 (*r.*), 444, 456, 484.
Smith, Sydney, M.A. 37, 80, 151, 240
South, Robert, D.D. . 4 (*r.*), 67, 86 (motto), 167, 173, 225, 225, 285, 304, 312 321, 326, 332, 335, 378, 382 (*r.*), 384, 397, 409.
Southey, Robert, LL.D. . . . . 40 (motto)
Spirit of the Pilgrims, Writers in the 99, 169
Spring, Gardiner, D.D., LL.D. 98, 216, 383, 436, 450
Stanhope, George, D.D. 426, 471
Steuchus Eugubinus . . . . . 334 (*r.*)
Stevens, Abel 99
Stillingfleet, Bishop 312
Storr & Flatt 444
Struthers, Gavin, D.D. . . . 39, 47 (*r.*), 53, 54 (*r.*), 66, 71, 75, 143

Stuart, Moses, M.A. . 100, 104, 152, 183, 198, 216, 264, 268, 269, 272, 275 276–7 (r.), 278, 279 (r.), 280 (r.), 289, 292, 298 299 (r.), 305, 306, 309, 310 (r.), 313, 341 (r.), 342 (r.), 345, 350, 382, 387, 391, 392 (motto), 422 426, 427 (r.), 429, 430, 431–2 (r.), 468.
Sweetser, Seth, D.D. 338, 350, 391, 482
Symonds, John, LL.D. . . . . 187 (r.), 237

T.

Tanner, Adam . . . . . 374 (r.), 376 (r.)
Taylor, Bishop . 72, 77, 100, 138, 165, 245, 250, 315, 317, 324, 366, 374, 401, 438
Taylor, Isaac 30, 43, 70, 134, 315
Theophylact, Archbishop 440
Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, Authors of . 177, 183
Tholuck, Frederick Augustus Gottreu, D.D. . . . . 198 (r.), 314
Thomas à Kempis . . . . . 78 (r.)
Tillotson, Archbishop . 72, 77, 91 (r.), 101, 127, 165, 172, 189, 235, 251 312, 314, 317 (r.), 320, 324 (motto), 325 333 (r.), 390, 393, 398, 409, 465.
Todd, John, D.D. 361
Töllner, John Theophilus (Johann Gottlieb), D.D. 313
Tomline, Bishop . . . . . 254, 333 (r.)
Tostat, or Tostatus, Bishop 334, 414
Townsend, George, A.M. 363
Tregelles, Samuel Prideaux, LL.D. 218
Trelcatius, the Younger . . . . . 279 (r.)
Trollope, William, M.A. . . . . 411 (r.), 440
Tucker, John . . . . . 191 (r.)
Turner, D. 110
Turretin . . . . . 182 (r.)

U and W.

Ullmann, Charles, D.D. 447
Waddington, George, M.A. 369
Wake, Archbishop 26, 78, 127, 140, 145, 162
Wallis, John, D.D. . . . . 303, 309 (r.), 312
Warburton, Bishop . . . . . 59 (r.)
Wardlaw, Ralph, D.D. 47, 54, 83, 313, 366 (motto), 373 (r.), 381, 432 (r.)
Waterland, Daniel, D.D. 91 (r.), 270 (r.), 286 (r.), 287 (r.), 288 (r.), 290 295 (r.), 312, 395, 477 (motto), 486.
Watson, Bishop 69, 91, 97, 110, 173, 180, 253
Watts, Isaac . . . . . 188, 234, 414, 446, 464. (Mottoes.)
Wesley, John, M.A. . . . . 5, 41, 62 (r.), 78, 91, 167, 173, 213, 251
Westminster Divines 177, 234, 273, 381
Wetstein, John James . . . . . 120 (r.), 213 (r.)

Wette, De, William Martin Leberecht, D.D. . . 193 (*r.*), 95-6 (*r.*)
Wettenhal, Bishop 102
Whately, Archbishop . 4 (*r.*), 63, 118, 123 (*r.*), 128, 136, 141, 144, 147, 154 163, 168, 179, 194, 214, 222, 238, 241, 249, 255 298, 303 (*r.*), 313, 322, 329, 461.
Whitaker, John, B.D. . . . . 342 (*r.*)
Whitby, Daniel, D.D. . . . . 411 (*r.*), 431 (*r.*), 439
White, Samuel, M.A. 427
Whitefield, George, M.A. 26, 78
Wiekus, or Wieckus, James, D.D. . . . . 376 (*r.*)
Wilberforce, William, Esq. 90, 103
Wilkins, Bishop . . . . . 385 (*r.*)
Williams, Joseph . . . . . 403, 405 (*r.*)
Williams, Roger . . . . . 64 (*r.*)
Williams, William R. 43, 148
Winslow, Governor 131
Winterbotham, William 93
Wiseman, Cardinal 196, 318, 333, 358, 365
Witsius, Herman, D.D. 366, 377, 394
Woods, Leonard, jun., D.D. . . . . 348 (*r.*)
Wotton, William, D.D. . . . . 352, 356, 357 (*r.*)
Wright, William, LL.D. . . . . 190 (*r.*), 222 (*r.*)

Y and Z.

Young, Edward, LL.D. . . . . 138 (motto), 165 (motto), 313, 321
Zwingle, Ulric . . . . . 182 (*r.*), 196 (*r.*)

IV. — UNITARIANS REFERRED TO.

Barbauld, Mrs. 96
Belsham, Thomas 95, 97, 99, 207, 354, 360
Benson, George, D.D. 115
Berry, Charles 95
Buckminster, Joseph Stevens 98
Burnap, George W., D.D. 105
Cappe, Newcome 95
Carpenter, Lant, LL.D. 47, 97, 98
Chandler, Samuel, D.D. 115
Channing, William Ellery, D.D. 47, 90, 98-9, 104, 105
Clarke, Samuel, D.D. 91, 120, 382
Cogan, E. 95
Dewey, Orville, D.D 104

Disney, John, D.D. 93
Dudith, Andrew 86
Duke of Grafton 95, 110, 119
Falkland, Lord Viscount 88
Field, William 95, 96, 113
Firmin, Thomas 55, 90, 91
Foster, James, D.D. 115
Fratres Poloni (the Polish Brethren) 95
Hartley, David, M.D. 92
Jebb, John, M.D. 93, 95, 111
Jones, Sir William 90
Kippis, Andrew, D.D. 109
Lardner, Nathaniel, D.D. 55, 90, 91, 92, 95, 115, 119, 120
Lindsay, James, D.D. 112
Lindsey, Theophilus, M.A. 92, 93, 95, 360
Locke, John 45, 89, 91, 119, 120, 123, 356, 386
Milton, John 55, 64, 89, 104, 120
Newton, Sir Isaac 55, 89, 91, 104, 114, 119, 120, 159
Norton, Andrews 47, 90, 100, 105
Noyes, George R., D.D. 99
Pounds, John 98
Price, Richard, D.D. 93, 94, 103
Priestley, Joseph, LL.D. . 55, 90, 93, 94, 96, 99, 104, 107, 111–12, 116, 359 360, 369.
Robberds, John Gooch 95
Sears, Edmund H. 105
Servetus, Michael 89, 64, 251
Shepherd, William, LL.D. 95
Socinus, Faustus 62, 87, 100, 108, 113
Socinus, Lælius 86–7
Sparks, Jared, LL.D. 105
Story, Judge 105
Taylor, John, D.D. 95, 105
Wakefield, Gilbert 112
Wallace, Robert 88
Ware, Henry, jun., D.D. 47, 99, 105
Ware, Mrs. Mary L. 99, 121
Whiston, William 91, 120
Yates, James, M.A. 95

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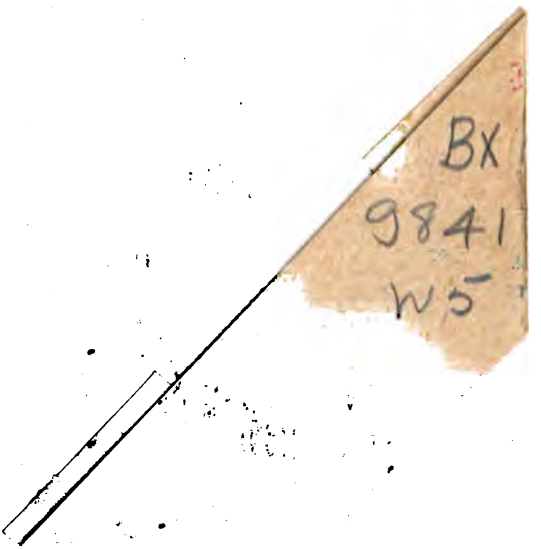
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